PLAYSTATION® MAGAZINE

PSM2

PLAYING PS2 LONGER, HARDER, FASTER

ISSUE 74 ■ MAG+DVD+TIPS BOOK ■ £3.99

PLAYSTATION® 3

UK NOVEMBER 2006

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LEGO STAR WARS 2 THE ORIGINAL TRILOGY

A new hope. All the magic of *Lego Star Wars* meets all the excitement of the original Star Wars trilogy. Classic Star Wars comes to PlayStation 2 at last.

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THIS MONTH YOU NEED TO READ...

WE LOVE LARA

TOMB RAIDER LEGEND

Her shorts are tighter and her expression more sultry... but is *Legend* more than just eye candy?

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PLAYSTATION 3

PS3 UK 2006

It's coming! Seriously! We've got all the news from the recent Sony conference plus hot new games shots. Flip to our news whirlwind NOW.

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DRAGON QUEST

The all-conquering Japanese RPG hits UK shores. How does it fare after translation? First UK review right here.

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THE CHOKE'S ON YOU

STRANGLE-HOLD

Violent and beautiful – film guru John Woo enters the PS3 gaming arena. But will his debut have us in its grip?

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YOU NEED TO WATCH...

ISSUE 74'S FREE DVD

WE'VE GOT STRANGLE-HOLD – NO CHOKING. AND GAWP AT SUPER-MAN'S RETURN

See the first footage of the amazing-looking *Stranglehold*, and then gasp awestruck at the first trailer for *Superman Returns*. Give thanks.

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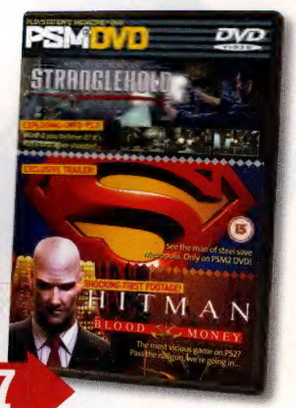

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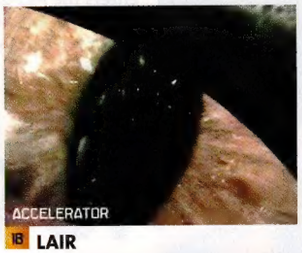

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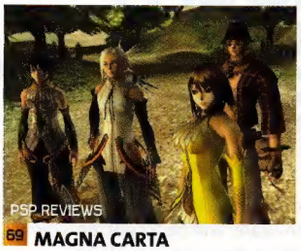

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★ John Woo takes the helm in this astonishing-looking PS3 shooter.

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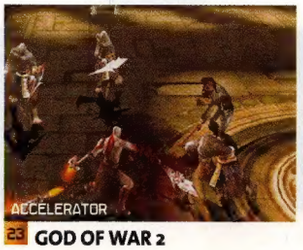

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PSM2

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FORGET ABOUT 'HOW MUCH'. FORGET ANY 'DELAY'. JUST GRAB A SPOON – HELP YOURSELF TO PS3.

Man. It's been like trying to pass a pineapple. These last six months have been sweet torture. Rumours. Promises. Disappointments. And the stoney, smiley face of enigmatic man-of-mystery Ken Kutaragi smiling benignly while holding aloft a big fat PlayStation 3 throughout. When's it coming out, Ken? [smiles] How much, Ken? [nods] Is there anything actually inside that case, Ken? [looks shifty... runs away...]

But it's here – as much as anything being released in November is 'here'. But the new announcement is an announcement with a difference. Sony have waited almost a year from the 2005 unveiling. This isn't a delaying tactic. This isn't a 'smokescreen'. This is Sony doing what they do best – thinking carefully about what they want to achieve, putting in place what they need for absolute global domination, then calmly setting the plan in motion.

Believe Sony when they say that PlayStation 3 will be in the UK in 2006. And know that when they said Spring 2006 (back last year) they were in the midst of trying to ruin the Xbox 360 launch. November for the launch of PlayStation 3? We believe it. Or rather we believe Sony will *try* for November in the UK and – worst case will slide limited numbers of the machine into the UK mid-December. Whatever – PS3 is real and it's here 2006.

Want to know everything? Flip to page 12. Want to get your PS3 on day one? Then you're going to have to start working right now. First of all, there's the small matter of getting £399 together (our top tip for that final price tag) then there's trying to make sure that you land one of those precious first-day UK PS3's. Know this: You will not get a PS3 unless you stump up a deposit and 'pre-order' one. That's what we're doing. Right now.

Know this also: PlayStation 3, Blu-ray, and high-def ARE different – and different enough to reignite your love of games. In the coming months 'sequels', 'lack of originality' and gripes about '70%-scoring meh-ware' will be forgotten. Games are about to get flashy, interesting, thought-provoking, annoying, exciting, confusing and pretty much every emotion that you haven't felt in years. Be very happy indeed. [BTW: Want to join us online? Check out www.myspace.com/PSM2 and get involved with the next-gen]. **The PSM2 Team**

PSM2 MAGAZINE PROMISE...

PSM2 is 100% independent. We write what we want, when we want. We don't ridicule popular opinion for the sake of controversy. Or generate hype without fact. Well, not *often*. We're not afraid to admit to our mistakes. And we're always first to put things right. We say it as we see it. Fact.

- Here at PSM2 we play every game we preview – that means genuine hands-on opinion, not what we've read about on the net.
- We're gamers just like you – and that's means we go into the kind of detail you demand. Check our sidebars for the latest facts and stats or screenshots that show off all the newest features.
- PSM2 is 100% editorially independent! You won't read the same quality of hard-hitting, informed, accurate – and, crucially, passionate – reviews anywhere else. And we can review games and reveal hardware other mags have to keep secret.
- We feature more screenshots than any other magazine.

WHAT'S ON THE DVD

PLAYSTATION®2 MAGAZINE + DVD
PSM2 DVD
DVD VIDEO
STRANGLEHOLD
EXPLODING ONTO PS3!
Would you believe it? It's PS3's finest uber-shooter!
EXCLUSIVE TRAILER!
See the man of steel save Metropolis. Only on PSM2 DVD!
SHOCKING FIRST FOOTAGE!
HITMAN
BLOOD MONEY
The most vicious game on PS2? Pass the nailgun, we're going in...

LATEST

Just in! The very latest gaming vids

SUPERMAN

- STRANGLEHOLD
- REBEL RAIDERS
- MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB REMIX
- SAMURAI WARRIORS 2
- MAGNA CARTA

HANDS ON

Exclusive footage from all the hot new games

HITMAN: BLOOD MONEY

- PES MANAGEMENT
- ICE AGE 2
- WORLD SERIES OF POKER
- G1 JOCKEY 4
- RAMPAGE: TOTAL DESTRUCTION
- TAK: THE GREAT JUJU CHALLENGE
- AND1 STREETBALL
- ROCK N ROLL ADVENTURES
- CLASSIC BRITISH RACING
- DYNASTY WARRIORS 5: XTREME LEGENDS
- BUZZ! THE BIG QUIZ

REVIEWS

Reviews for new PS2 games with commentary

DRIVER: PARALLEL LINES

- ONIMUSHA: DAWN OF DREAMS
- THE GODFATHER
- FIGHT NIGHT 2006
- APE ESCAPE 3
- 25 TO LIFE
- DRAKENGARD 2
- FIFA STREET 2
- ROGUE GALAXY
- KINGDOM HEARTS II

EXTRAS

Stuff that doesn't fit anywhere else...

- DRIVER: PARALLEL LINES INTERVIEW
- HITMAN TAPE BY AZZ WALLIS

PSP

The latest footage from the best new PSP games

POWER STONE COLLECTION

- KOLOOMN
- BAM GHOST
- POCKET RACERS
- ARMOURED CORE: FORMULA FRONT

ESSENTIAL PSP 2

This month we've another slice of our exclusive PSP content. That means *more* game saves, wallpapers and much more to extract from your free disc. Check below for instructions on how to make the most of your extra features. Enjoy.

FIRST, GET YOUR PSP HOOKED UP

■ Attach your USB wire between your home computer and PSP. Stick the disc into your computer. Now enable USB connection by going to 'Settings' and selecting 'USB Connection'. Your PSP will now appear as an extra hard drive either in 'My Computer' on PC or on the desktop with a Mac. Double click to open it and you'll now be inside PSP's memory stick. You'll see folders inside called 'Photos' etc. Important: You should always remember to 'Eject the device' before disconnecting the PSP.

WALLPAPERS

■ You'll find 50 (yes 50!) amazing gaming wallpapers to brighten up your PSP background. Just click through a selection of our favourite game images, choose one and drag it across to the 'Photos' folder. On your PSP view the image and then select 'Set as wallpaper' to lay it out on the backdrop. Simple.

PSM2 REVIEWS TO GO

■ This is your ultimate source of PS2 knowledge all condensed onto your PSP, which means you get all of our listings pages featured in this magazine to check out on the way to your local games shop. To put them on your PSP select 'PSM2 Reviews To Go' from the disc and copy both files into the 'Photos' folder. One contains all our PS2 scores and the other our PSP ones. Now open the 'Photos' folder and open whichever listings you want to take a look at.

GAME SAVES

■ Use these 37 saves to complete your PSP games more quickly. Some contain completely unlocked content and others are saved just before final bosses – to let you feel as though you've achieved something. Simply copy across your chosen game save into your 'Savedata' folder, fire up the game then load the save file from its main menu and away you go.

PSP MOVIES

■ We've got ten movies handily converted in MP4 format ready for you to view on PSP. And all you have to do is open the 'Movies' folder on the disc. Now create a folder called MP_ROOT next to PSP folder (not inside it). Next create a sub-folder inside called 100MNV01. Now copy the movies from the disc into this folder. Disconnect and they're ready.

HOW TO USE PSP VIDEO EXPRESS

You can drag and drop this software onto your computer then convert DVD files and other movie formats into MP4s. You can then watch them on the move via PSP. Open up the disc, select either the PC or Mac folder and drop your choice of software onto your desktop. Install it (double-click on it) and once it's finished follow these instructions to get going.

HOW TO USE PSP VIDEO 9

This program is fairly tricky to get started, but here are four handy steps to ease the process.

■ Start the program and click 'Convert' in the top-left hand corner. You're now at the conversion screen.

■ Press 'One Click Transcode' to open a browser window and select the type of file you want to convert, AVI, MOV, WMA, VOB, and the like. (Copy VOB files off your DVDs onto your PC.)

■ It's important to remember NOT to change the file names of the converted files because if you do, they won't be read by PSP. Weird, eh? But that's the way it is.

■ Then click 'Copy Video to PSP' and you're now ready to watch movies on the move.

HOW TO USE PSP WARE

This is simple to use but has less options to tweak video quality.

■ Connect your PSP to your computer and engage USB mode.

■ Open PSP Ware and click Movies then drag your video file into the big empty window. It'll then begin converting.

■ Tick the box of the completed file, press 'Sync' and it'll be sent to your PSP.

HOW TO USE PSP VIDEO EXPRESS

The full version (available through this demo) is capable of ripping straight from a DVD, but this demo can't.

■ Start the program and click 'Open' on the right-hand side of the screen.

■ Choose a file and it'll begin to play on screen. Click 'Record It'. Now click on 'PSP video transfer' on the top bar to go straight to the transfer screen.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH: "DON'T WORRY, IT'S NOT COVERED IN ANTHRAX OR ANYTHING"

Letters

THE LOUDEST VOICES IN THE PS2 UNIVERSE

► EMAIL: psm2@futurenet.co.uk – subject line 'Letters'

► WRITE TO: Letters, PSM2, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW

PSM2 WINNER!

Every issue, the writer of the Star Letter gets our eternal thanks... Oh, PLUS a red hot package of PS2 goodies fresh from the PSM2 booty chest. So entertain us and your fellow readers. Let the prattle commence!

COLOSSUS – A MADMAN RANTS "WORST GAME EVER IN THE ADVENTURE GAMING!!"

WARNING! This letter appears in complete unabridged form and contains spelling that some readers may find amusing

► **Dear PSM2,**

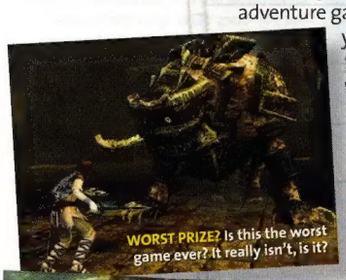
I have never write a review before, but I feel a reason to now. I know this game had beautiful graphics and obviously loved by many. When I saw your review gave a rating of 91 I thought it far way over the top I think it should be rating around 50 to 60, the reason why is because this game is absolutely rubbish and also this had to be one of the most BORING game I've ever experienced in the adventure gaming of all time, I know you may be shock but I'm telling the truth you should seen it for yourself if you don't belive me. There are five reason why this game is rubbish.

1. This game is about lonely depressed character who doesn't even have a name! (strange) wandering around in the emptyworld where there is NOTHING to see or fight except Colossi and ride a horse that it only two things you do in this game! AWFUL.
2. There are no STORYLINE in this game, so what sort of this game is about!!! NOTHING.
3. The camera angles clearly need hard work to be done, because it is the WORST I've ever seen, DISGRACEFUL.
4. What really bother me is that ALL YOU DO IS KILL THESE COLOSSI!! that is!, YOU HAVE NO OTHER MISSIONS, NO PUZZLES TO SOLVE, NO NEW ABILITIES TO GAIN, NO EXPERIENCE TO LEVEL UP, AND NO OTHER ENEMIES TO KILL so all you doing is going from ONE COLOSSI TO ANOTHER, CLIMBING THEM and FIGURING HOW TO KILL THEM that all you do and absolutely NOTHING BETWEEN COLOSSI!!!! BORING.
5. This game also have lot of repetition because everytime you kill colossi you end up back into the temple!!!!.

Now you understand why I called this game rubbish, WORST game ever in the adventure gaming in the world.

Nick Overmars, email

Brilliant – we love differences of opinion and we love them even more when they're so, erm, 'unique'. Nick, if he agrees, is our new guest reviewer. No, really. Check back next month for his opinions on *We Love Katamari*. We reckon he's gonna be really into it...



WORST PRIZE? Is this the worst game ever? It really isn't, is it?

NOT TO ALL TASTES: *Colossus* is great, but perhaps not for everybody.

ICO-N'T BELIEVE IT

► **Dear PSM2,**

After hearing the PSM2 team wax lyrical about *Ico* non-stop for the past three years I was a happy man when I heard it was due to be re-released.

Sadly, I'm completely underwhelmed by it. *Ico* feels like a retro game or at the very most a first-gen PS2 game. The camera suffers from poor positioning. The look around (right stick) ability is severely limited, which means you spend half of your time trying to move to a better position just so you can see. This is worst when Yorda has been carried off by a spirit, you haven't a clue where the portal is and you can't use the right stick to locate it before it's too late. The colours are insipid which emphasises the fogging. The combat is bad.

I *will* finish the game and maybe I'll have a different view then, but at the minute it's just not doing it for me. I don't see the attraction. I'm so disappointed. I think that the PSM2 team has got a bit too nostalgic about *Ico*. 93% is way too high a score. To put it into perspective the brilliant *God of War* got only 92%.

Gary Roe, email

See? We love a mass debate. We reckon *Ico*'s beauty and atmosphere allows it to rise above its (obvious) flaws, but hey – wouldn't it be dull if we all thought the same way?

GOIN' POSTAL

You know how in cheap bags of crisps you sometimes find a green one? The residents of Goin' Postal are the green crisps to the rest of the letters pages' Sea Salt and Balsamic Vinegar flavour kettle chips. Or something.

ALL SHOOK UP
I think Dan G thinks he's Elvis.
Sharna Lowery, Guernsey
Dan D thinks he's Shakin' Stevens

'HILARIOUS' JOKE
I've been playing games for over seven years now.

ASH IN THE PAN: It's Ashley from *Resi 4*. Keep calm, lads, she's made of pixels.

SPEAK TO THE TEAM APRIL 21ST

CALL THE PSM2 HOTLINE!

01225 788157

YES, now YOU can SPEAK to PSM2! Call the Hotline and leave us a message at any time, day or night! Alternatively, call us LIVE between 2pm and 5pm on Friday April 21st, when we'll be answering the phone in person! And it ain't no '60p per second' porno line either! Bargain!

"AM I SUPPOSED TO BE TURNED ON BY THIS?"

URBAN PAIN

► **Dear PSM2,**

Urban games dying out, you say? *Ico* is basically the story of a kid trying to escape from prison with a curvy white chick while beating up black guys with a stick. You don't get much more urban than that.

George McCall, Co. Tyrone

Coming soon: *Harvest Moon: I'm Gonna End Your Muthafrickin' Life, Ho.*

FINAL SIGHT

► **Dear PSM2,**

Liked your sequels feature, but surely the game most in need of a follow-up is *Second Sight*, which I know you frigging loved.

Michael Veal, Essex

We'd adore a follow-up to *Second Sight*. We won't get one, though, because no-one bought it. So unless it gets an *Ico*-style re-release, that's probably it for PS2's best telekinesis-'em-up. Still, we live in hope.

ION LIKE A LION

► **Dear PSM2,**

On Amazon, I found this reader review: "This is a game that will sell a million copies. If you do not buy this awesome game, you will be missing out on a whole lot of fun." That's about *Jet Ion GP*. I wonder if free speech is such a good thing after all.

Carl Bryan, email

The good thing about the net is that anyone can use it. The bad thing about it is that *anyone* can use it.

RESI PHWOOOARRR

► **Dear PSM2**

I've just completed *Resi 4* again. There's something odd about Ashley. She's dressed in a tight white outfit, showing off her boobs, which I'm sure aren't real. Now what confuses me is whether this is supposed to be a joke, getting the stupid US white trash to wear some dysfunctional clothing, or am I actually supposed to be turned on by this? Logic tells me the former, however the net tells me the latter. Lord, there are some sickos out there. I do have a few other foibles with the game. How did a cockney merchant end up selling arms in a provincial region of Spain? It's not realistic, because the stuff he sells you actually works, and that's not what I'd expect from a Spanish Delboy.

Matthew Power, email

One thing. How exactly would a virtual lady ever have 'real' boobs? And the Merchant is a cockney? Nah, he's clearly *pirate*.

HATS: OFF

► **Dear PSM2**

Can I have a *Fatal Fury* hat? In return, I've send you a hat from a chemical suit. Don't worry, it's not covered in anthrax or anything. Can we have a picture of Milf wearing it?

Mike Williams, Warley

PHONE PSM2 WITH: NO MORE HAT REQUESTS ONLINE GAMING THOUGHTS MAD RANTS GODFATHER VIEWS?

We thought this was a nappy when we opened it. So obviously, we were only too glad to try and make Milf put it on his head. Unfortunately he claims to have 'some dignity left'. Bad news hat fans, they're all gone now so please stop asking.

NOT HARD WEARING

► **Dear PSM2**

After writing to you some time ago about the lack of fellow online gamers, I just wanted to update this view as the current state of online play is now far healthier than ever before. Games like *Pro Evo 5*, *Rugby League 2* and *Battlefield 2* have really set the world of online gaming alight but my favourite must still be *Hardware Online Arena*. A plucky band of us have started taking the game to new levels – we're not only trying to get a quick frag here and a quick frag there, but we've even invented new games to play within the title. These include racing, Arctic Gladiator (two men enter, one man leaves with a limp), Zombie Railgun Tag (great title, eh?) and our favourite, Capture The Hangar.

We've now been playing this on Sundays for a month or two now, but we're running out of teams to challenge So we thought we'd call you out for a rumble as you could be the men to rise to the task of taking us on. Visit our site, http://coc.bootroom.com/TUK_FunNights for all the rules.

Ian Bowden, 'A Team' rep, email

What, and spend our Sundays playing frikkin' *Hardware*, of all things? Um... OK. Bagsy the big tank.

BATTLEFIELD OF DREAMS: Have the likes of *Modern Combat* made online gaming fun at last?

Daniel Martin, Ammanford
You must be really rubbish at them.

TARNISHED GOLD

My mate thinks *Golden Age Of Racing* is better than *Gran Turismo 4*.
Jamie Morris, Shrewsbury

Well, each to their own. We think it's time you found some new mates.

BRYAN NO-MATES

Don't get me wrong, I have friends.
Bryan O'Leary, email
Are you sure?

EASIEST QUERY EVER

Should I buy *FIFA* or *Pro Evo*?
Alex G, email
We can't believe you don't know the answer to that by now. *PES*, obviously.

WHAT'S THE DATE?

Maybe you will be able to arrange a date.
Neo2000, email
Andy's still single. Ask him yourself.

SEXUAL HEALING

I love PSM2, but not in a sexual way.

DEATH JAM

H Rush, email
That's a shame. As we said just now, Andy's still single.

We don't see murderers roaming the streets.
Stijn Hanson, email
Then you don't live in Rich's area, clearly.

Ur txts

YOU SEND US A TEXT. WE PRETEND TO UNDERSTAND AND OCCASIONALLY REPLY.

INCOMING

Texts! We like texts, because they're like letters, but shorter, giving our eyes more time to do other things.

PSM2 I read that Sony stopped a PSP keyboard. Is this true? Tim
There was going to be an unofficial (non-Sony) keyboard, yes. It was scrapped, because a PSP keyboard is somewhere ahead of sunglasses made of razors and the Gizmondo in the crap ideas league.

PSM2 why does dan d look like a extra from shameless?
That's his 'look'. It takes him eight hours to look like that. Eight hours slept in a bush.

PSM2 I'm absolutely crazy bout Devil May Cry - wen's the movie going to be comin out hu's going to be starin in it? Thnx!! :
***DMC* movie? Don't think so, sorry. Maybe you're thinking of Devil May Hare, the Bugs Bunny cartoon from 1954. Possibly.**

PSM2 i often read your magazine on the toilet and really enjoy the adverts at the rear of it
We love all our fans. Well, nearly.

PSM2 how do i get through the robbery stage in Blingsley Hill?
You're playing *Crime Life*?! Try this. Hold down Up, ⊗, ⓐ, ◎... then get a brain.

PSM2 What is the official top 10 best games ever?...THANKS!
1) Kiss Chase. 2) Tag. 3) British Bulldog. 4) Hungry, Hungry Hippos. 5) Ker-Plunk. 6) The Game Of Life. 7) Snap. 8) Dominoes. 9) Deal Or No Deal. 10) *Jet Ion GP*. Easy.

PSM2 To answer james nelms in issue 73. saladin is the name of some mythical hero that freed kurdish iraqis from oppression.
Yeah. We knew that.

psm2 Oi Oi. Will there be a new Silent Hill game to accompany the film release?
We reckon there'll be a new *Silent Hill* on PS3, but it'll have nowt to do with the film. Sorry.

PSM2 Can u please send me a free copy of fahrenheit?
Why, yes, we can! Although by 'yes', we do, of course, mean 'scrounger'.

PSM2 Just got ur mag the answer to the friends trivia question is Crash nitro kart.i think. Do i get a prize??
No. The reason being that we printed the answer to the right of the review. See?

PSM2 is there any news of PES6?
Keep 'em peeled.

YOUR PICTURES

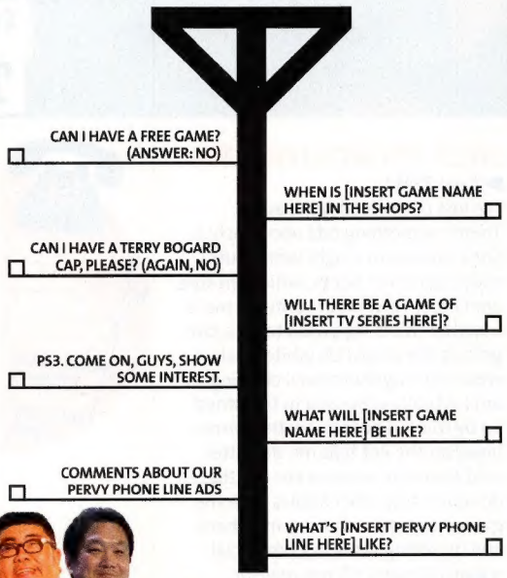
CRACKIN' BLACK: We challenged you to finish *Black* on Black Ops mode – and Craig Edgar in Dundee did. And here's that picture of Rambo we promised. Enjoy!

STREETS HAVE NO SHAME: Ho-ho. That's like, part of a man! Hoo!

SCAT SHARP: This is Sam from London's fella. Get a new one, eh?

RECEPTION

All the stuff that's been on your minds recently, ranked in order of popularity. Wow, hey?


CAN I HAVE A FREE GAME? (ANSWER: NO)
WHEN IS [INSERT GAME NAME HERE] IN THE SHOPS?
CAN I HAVE A TERRY BOGARD CAP, PLEASE? (AGAIN, NO)
WILL THERE BE A GAME OF [INSERT TV SERIES HERE]?
PS3. COME ON, GUYS, SHOW SOME INTEREST.
WHAT WILL [INSERT GAME NAME HERE] BE LIKE?
COMMENTS ABOUT OUR PERVY PHONE LINE ADS
WHAT'S [INSERT PERVY PHONE LINE HERE] LIKE?

YOUR PLAYSTATION 3 QUESTIONS ANSWERED!

WITH RON KUTARAGI
(the less famous, younger brother of President and CEO of Sony Computer Entertainment, Ken Kutaragi).

SECRET HEAVEN

► Dear PSM2,
What's up with Sony? How come they're being so secretive about PS3? I've only heard scraps of info since last E3 – surely we should have stacks of information by now? Not that I care, because there are still lots of great PS2 games to come, so I don't mind if they take their time.
Amir Bashir, Gillingham
"Hello there, Amir. Your name rhymes, did you know that? Ken wouldn't have noticed that. Nooo way. Anyway, PS3 has been kept secret because Ken's a very private man. I tried reading his diary once, but he caught me and said he'd glue my eyelids shut if I tried it again. But Ken made a speech just the other day in Tokyo – see page 12 for all the details – which reveals everythjng you could possibly want to know about PS3! Except the price, that is. Let's hope no-one asks about that, eh? Right, what's next... oh, *pooflaps*.

ANNEKA PRICE

► Dear PSM2,
I read about the price of PS3 on the internet. It said that, because of the Blu-ray drive and the Cell processor chip, the price it costs to make one PS3 unit is around 700 – 800 US dollars and that the console itself would cost a hefty $900. Is this true or is this just a lot of random internet speculation?
Ahmed El-Gendy, email
"I asked Ken about this, and his eyes lit up. He ran off to his room, shouting "$900?! that's a great idea!" and "Think how many Pussycat Dolls records I could buy with that!" What have you done Ahmed?! You know that one sniff of the folding stuff drives Ken bananas! QUICK! Someone suggest 50p before it's too late."

FEELING BLU-RAY

► Dear PSM2,
Athough I'm an anti-Xbox person, i still need to point out the facts that mean Xbox 360 might kick PS3's ass. It is true that Xbox 360 doesn't have a Blu-ray drive and all other things that PS3 has, but have you thought about Xbox's quality? Have you noticed the standard of graphics it produces in that DVD drive? Far better than PS2. Why? Because it uses type of format that a computer can't even read, so it doesn't need a Blu-ray drive – so it's cheaper. You just use Media Centre to record a movie and transfer it to Xbox 360 after you've changed the video into a readable format. Isn't it great? And look at the console itself! It's iPod white and Xbox green, for goodness sake! And the controller is much better looking than PS3's controller, too. PlayStation 3's pad is boomerang-shaped. The first time my grandad looks at it, he'll probably grab it and throw it like a toy. Unless they design a better controller, I will have to stick to PS2.
Felix Tang, email
"Nope. You lost me at 'Media Centre'. Is that anything like 'Early Learning Centre'? Wow, a disc that a computer can't even read. Now you're talking my language – utter nonsense! Ken tells me that Blu-ray is huge – as much as 50 times as big as the "crap old CD-ROM in Xbox 360". So there. [NOTE: These are the opinons of Ron Kutaragi, not PSM2. No. We love 360. We really do. And all of it's brilliant men-in-tin-hat games.]

HOW 2 TEXT PSM2

Yes! Now you can text your questions and letters to PSM2. No more fiddling with 'paper' and 'pens'. When you want answers, our mobile portal is wide open and waiting. Here's how you do it.

DO THIS NOW! WE'RE WAITING!

It really couldn't be simpler. In the words of Marvin Gaye let's get some 'textual healing'... Or something. We've set up not one, but three different lines upon which to reach us. Look.

TEXT THE TEAM!

First up we want you to ask us a question. Anything! We'll feature your questions and answers in the mag and – we swear by almighty Lorne Lanning himself – that we'll do our best to text you back a reply as soon as poss. The best bit? You only pay for the text once we reply. (Answers to your PlayStation questions will cost you 25p plus your normal TXTing charge).
Start your text PSM2 then a space, then your question. Text the lot to 87103. God willing we'll reply.

MAKE US LAUGH!

Taken a photo of anything decent recently? Fancy sharing it with the readership of PSM2? We want to see your pictures. Best picture each month wins a booty of games. Pics cost 50p, plus your usual TXTing charge. Just try and keep them vaguely game related eh? No violence or porn thanks. Second thoughts... if you have any hot certified-over-18 female friends or relations that we can hook Andy up with... Or men, come to think of it.
Start your text PSM2PICS then a space, then your message. Enclose you pic and text the lot to 07921 889345. Best pic wins lunatic booty.

VOTE FOR GAMES!

What games do you want to see in PSM2? Which are you most looking forward to? Text us and we'll compile your Most Wanted chart each month. What's more, one entry each month will win the game they vote for. Texts cost 25p plus your usual TXTing charge.
Start your text PSM2VOTE then a space, then the name of the game you want to 87103. Be lucky!

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Accelerator

SCANDAL ... LAYSTATION

PLAYSTATION 3 HITS THE UK IN NOVEMBER!

PS3 is confirmed for November release in the UK – so why is everyone upset?

Tokyo, March 15th, 2006. A few moments after 3pm, SCE President Ken Kutaragi takes the stage at the hastily convened Playstation Business Briefing 2006 to address a select audience of Japanese developers and journalists. "It is my aim to clear things up about the PlayStation 3 today," announces Kutaragi, – and one hour, a few slides and several bombshells later, the landscape of videogames has changed forever.

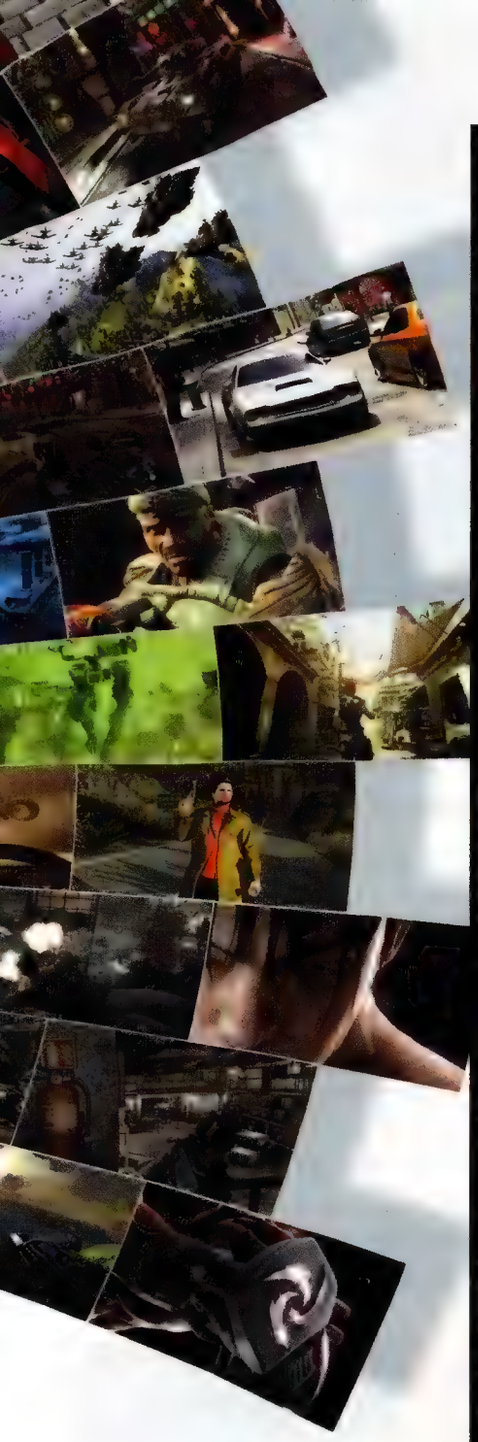
The big news – PS3 will launch *worldwide* in early November, with a 60Gb hard drive (which may or may not be included in the box) and free online play. All games will come on Blu-ray disks and the entire PSone and PS2 back catalogue will be compatible with PS3 (though expect the inevitable obscure drop out), and all games will be instantly re-rendered in hi-def. Imagine your dusty old *San Andreas* suddenly looking like the pin-sharp PC version. Now that's PS3 magic.

Sony expects to ship six million PS3's by the end of fiscal year 2006 (which ends on March 31st, 2007). That's four months after launch. Sony haven't confirmed the initial allocation, but claim a production capacity of one million PS3's a month. Using simple maths: you can work out that at best Sony can only have two million PS3's ready for launch worldwide.

Expect Japan to get the lion's share (say, one million, as Sony's home territory), then America, say, 750,000 (the biggest potential market), that would leave only 250,000 for *all* of Europe – so the UK allocation could be as low as 75,000. When you consider that Xbox 360 launched with only 50,000, even that figure might be optimistic. Upshot? Don't expect to pick up PS3 on a high street shelf before Xmas – and if some do get through it's going to be like Jingle All The Way out there...

"UK ALLOCATION COULD BE AS LOW AS 75,000 – AND THAT'S BEING OPTIMISTIC"

Sony's online service, dubbed 'Playstation Network Platform', will offer voice chat, matchmaking lobbies (for online games) and a marketplace, allowing users to download music, films and games. The basic service will be free – a major advantage over Xbox Live – with, speculation suggests, individual charges per download. For example, you might pay, say, 79p to download a song, like the iTunes store. The PS3 will act as a central server for your home, allowing you to swap media



HOW TO BAG YOURSELF A PS3

Want to pre-order a PS3 *now*? As we write, it's not so easy...

Just seven months to go until PS3 launches, then. That's not that long, really – yet there isn't a single shop willing to take a deposit to secure a PS3. OK, so at the time of writing there isn't a fixed price let alone an exact day, but you would've thought high-street stores would've been clambering over each other to get at your wallet. We trawled countless UK-based websites, a clutch of import ones and contacted some big-name shops trying to reserve a shiny new PS3, and here's what happened.

	WHO ARE THEY?	WHAT THEY SAY...	PSM RECKONS
GAME www.game.uk.com	Europe's leading videogame retailer with over 600 stores in the UK, France and other warmer climates.	The high street's number one force was cagey when pressed on the pre-order subject. "We can't take any money off you until we know exactly when we're going to get them," we were told. "We've not even been briefed on a price for the machine yet". Bum. Ah well, they did offer a crumb of hope by advising us to contact them again in August.	They're spot-on with the pre-order date and they'll be advertising the service as soon as possible, we think.
gamestation	One of the fastest growing game stores with over 200 shops nationwide.	We'd been tipped off about a 'secret list' that only people in the know could attach their names to – a bit like the Masons. But it turns out to be as discreet as Jodie Marsh's breasts. "Yeah mate, we can put you on a list and then give you a call when we can officially take a deposit off you," we're told immediately. Sounds good – but they're no wiser on the price.	This is your best bet for something nearing an official pre-order. Get down to your local shop right this minute.
Dixons	The leading electronics dealership in the UK also has a direct line to Sony HQ. (Not necessarily true.)	"Nah, you can't order one yet. Sony are having problems fitting the hardware inside the case," the voice at the end of the phone told us. "So that's why it's not out yet." Cheers, Mr Dixons. But there was good news. "It's going to be £300." Blimey! Where to we sign up? Unfortunately pre-orders "won't start until July/August". Nuts.	Although clearly formulating their own delay theories, you'll probably be able to pre-order PS3s from August. Look forward to 'bargain' game + multi-game deals too.
PLAY.COM	One of the largest online entertainment retailers – straight out of Jersey.	No idea. They've not even got a picture of PS3 on the site and when you search for 'PlayStation 3', your first match is *Ghost Recon 3* on Xbox 360. Weird.	They've not got a clue and don't seem to be too bothered yet.
PLAY-ASIA.COM	Import specialist dealing with Asian (read: Japanese) games and hardware.	You can sign up to a helpful e-mail service that will update you as soon as the pre-order service is available.	Worth checking out, if only to be on the receiving end of some definite information.
7DE	Hong-Kong based importer stocked with all the latest far East gadgets and games.	This site admits there aren't PS3s in stock, but lets you to the checkout with a machine worth $0. Does this mean you get a free one when the stock arrives?	Japan is certain to get machines before the UK. Expect to pay royally for it though.
eBay.co.uk	The auction site where you can purchase anything from old PSone games to a girl's virginity. Really.	Score! You can bid now for the chance to win a link to a website that will take your pre-order and your deposit and probably won't call or send you a PS3... Who *wouldn't* think that a good idea?	Don't. Even. Go. There.

PSM RECKONS Shops don't believe Ken's 'November UK' promise. Our bet? The machine *will* launch mid-November. Worst case? Early December – Sony *won't* allow Xbox 360 another free Christmas and the only way to get one will be to pre-order with a big, reputable, powerful chain of shops once the cost of PS3 becomes clearer, post-E3 in May.

between peripherals – see page 26 to see Sony's ambitious link up plans for PSP.

Finally Ken spoke of PS3 games being "live" (ie, full of amazing in-game online possibilities) and that the PlayStation 3 concept is "4D". No idea what that means, but by God it sounds good.

PSM RECKONS *Great news. Don't be fooled by the ill-informed, headlines. PS3 has only been delayed in Japan – even if it had launched in the Spring, as originally claimed, we were never going to get PS3 in the UK until late 2006. Sony still won't confirm as to whether they'll be including the hard-drive in the box,w but developers are making all their games with an HDD in mind. Sounds confusing, but all will be confirmed at the the E3 show in May. The free online service sounds great and hopefully Sony will keep the things you do pay for nice and cheap. The future starts here. Might be wise to start saving now...*

PS3 – EARLY OR LATE?

Or why everyone's got it wrong...

'No PS3 for Christmas', 'Sony's Delay Station', 'Six months wait for PS3'... As nobody expected PS3 to launch in the UK until late 2006, just how did newspapers/magazines get the story so wrong? While PS3 has been delayed by six months in Japan (where it was mooted for a nebulous 'Spring' release), the console was *never* going to hit the UK until late 2006. Traditionally, there's at least a six month delay between a console's Japanese and UK launch, so even if PS3 launched today, we wouldn't expect it until December/early 2007. Given that nobody has even touched a finished PS3 unit, a November UK release is *earlier* than we expected. If history had repeated itself, a May/June Japanese launch would've meant October/November in the US and, as insiders were predicting, March 2007 in the UK. The real story – PS3 is five months *early*. Fact.

PSM2 PLAYSTATION 2 UK NOVEMBER 2006 THE FACTS. THE GAMES. THE FUTURE.

YOUR GUIDE TO THE PSM2 PS3 LAUNCH SPECIAL!

Everything you need to know about PS3. Fact.

BAG YOUR PS3
Where you can and can't pre-order a machine. To your left.
PAGE 13

WANT PS3? BUY THESE!
What you should be saving up for in preparation for the arrival of your new machine.

HD-DVD VS BLU-RAY
Why Blu-ray disc stomps all over HD-DVD.
PS3 PLUS
The hardware secrets that'll make PlayStation 3 a winner.
PAGE 14

"BEYOND THE BOX"
... with Sony's man-in-the-know, Phil Harrison.
GEOMERICS TECH DEMO
Why the next-generation looks amazing.

EVERY PS3 GAME EVER
A complete list of every game you can expect on PS3 so far.
PAGE 15

THE GAMES
Fresh info on the newest titles.
Final Fantasy VII
Untold Legends
Splinter Cell: Double Agent
Rainbow Six Vegas
Lair
Ni-Oh
Project Offset
The Outsider
Project IM

PAGE 16

STRANGLEHOLD
Six pages of John Woo-directed PlayStation 3 gunplay.
PAGE 88

WANT PS3? BUY THESE!

Doritos? Check. Comfy sofa? Oh, yeah. 1080p High Definition television? Y... *How much!??!*

A 1080P HIGH DEF TV

Just bought a high definition TV? Sit down. We've got some bad news. While your new PS3 will look superb on your new super-telly, the chances are that you haven't got one that exactly matches it. Check your specs – is your telly a 720p model? What's the maximum screen resolution? Something like 1024 by 768? Able to handle a 1080i signal but not a 1080p? Then you're not showing PS3 off at its best.

PS3 – both its games and Blu-ray movie discs – run at a resolution of 1920 by 1080. If want to see every pixel the machine kicks out (without any downscaling as your TV rounds things off to fit on your screen) then you're going to need a 1020 by 1080 TV.

And the 'p's and the 'i's are important. 1080i TVs (currently the top end of what you can get on the high street) actually only draws 540 lines at a time – the image is 'interlaced' the first 540 go up, then in a fraction of a second the 540 lines between these

are shown. A 1080p set can show all 1080 lines at once. The result is a steadier, sharper picture. You know how shops have been describing HD-TVs as 'HD Ready'? Watch for the new buzzword – 'Full HD', used to describe TVs that go the full distance.

We've seen the two side by side and, yes, you can tell a *tiny* difference. 1080p looks better – but only just. Now for the *really* bad news. Currently there's only one 1080p TV available (and that's still yet to make its way to the stores). It's Philips' 37PF9830 and it's you're for [cough] £2300. Not to worry, though. Expect the price of 1080p sets to drop to the £1700 that's currently the norm for 720p sets by November.

LOTS OF REGION FREE GAMES

Yes. PlayStation 3 will be 'region free'. This means that any game released anywhere will be playable on your UK PS3. With so much space on Blu-ray they can put all the different language versions and different TV format versions on one disc – though the new, world standard for HD-TV and HDMI connection makes this last point a bit redundant.

7.1 SURROUND SOUND

Count your speakers. Six? Five? Two?... Er, none? Well you're going to need eight to make the most of PS3. Blu-ray (and PS3 games) go right up to the maximum eight channels allowed by Dolby Digital. That's a centre speaker below your TV, stereo left and right, side left and right and rear left and right. Plus a sub-woofer bass channel. Blimey.

Team your PS3 with a Sony 7.1 Dolby Digital ES amp such as their STR DA7100ES. Cost: £1300. And you'll need speakers. Try the Castle Audio Compact 7.1 set – it'll blow your balls off for a very reasonable £1000. Sounds a bit excessive? Real hi-fi snobs are already moaning about Blu-ray's failure to properly support the full-on, lossless Dolby Digital HD – demos of which have powered up to 14 separate speakers. Now *that's* wallet-busting, friends. Best see your bank manager.

HD-DVD VS BLU-RAY

Why Sony and PlayStation 3 will win the war, and why it's all thanks to Han Solo and James Bond...

By now you'll be familiar with the upcoming format war. Both Blu-ray disc and HD-DVD formats want to replace your DVDs and make you buy all your movies all over again. Blu-ray is bigger but HD-DVD is cheaper. Which will win? With PlayStation 3 backing Blu-ray and Xbox 360 promising to (eventually) support HD-DVD with a bolt-on external drive, anything could happen. But let's not forget the power of Hollywood...

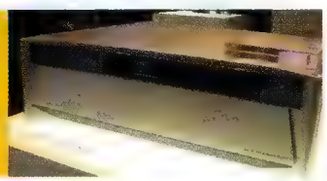
While the formats look identical on-screen, the winner on tech-specs is Blu-ray, being up to 50Gb in size compared to a max of 30Gb for HD-DVD. Your movies will look the same with either format, but the capacity to add more soundtracks (including, eventually, full lossless Dolby Digital HD – see left) and extras mean you'll get more on Blu-ray. That said, the real winner will be whichever format signs up the most movie studios to release their films on their format. As soon as the public gets a whiff that one format has more movies thant the other, then the battle is over – regardless of which is actually 'best'.

So far HD-DVD has bagged Universal Studios exclusively. That means that you'll only ever be able to see King Kong and um... Waterworld on HD-DVD. Meanwhile the Blu-ray camp has snagged 20th Century Fox exclusively and Sony now own the rights to MGM movies. What does this mean? You'll only ever be able to see Star Wars and James Bond on Blu-ray.

PSM RECKONS *It's true. It is going to come down to which format has the movies you want. Currently, they're evenly matched in terms of sheer numbers but with Star Wars and Bond batting for the Sony team... And PlayStation 3 is only ever going to ever support one format... We think we smell a winner here.*

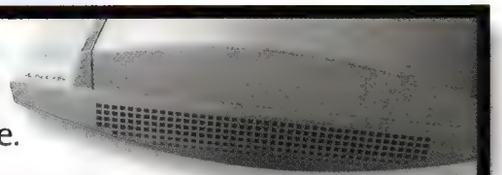
BUT WHY DO I NEED BLU-RAY?

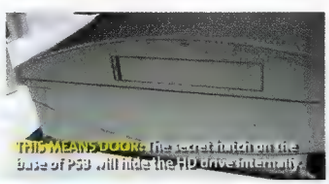
Simple. Because movies on HD look amazing. Have you seen those demos of penguins and snowboarders in your local TV shop. Impressive, eh? Now imagine them showing Mission: Impossible 3 or remastered Star Wars in the same quality. And get ready for hours of extras. You WILL buy all your movies again. And that's no Jedi mind trick.



HARD FACT!

The REAL power behind PS3's hardware.





THIS MEANS DOOM: The secret is rich on the base of PS3. Will hide the HD drive internally.

THE 60GB HARD-DRIVE

STOP PRESS: Ken told us that the hard drive was 'required' leading us (and the world) to assume that it would be in the box. However in discussion with Phil Harrison (see opposite) just days later he told us that "I couldn't give a definite answer as to whether it will be in the box. We'll know more at E3 (in May 2006)". Hmm. This despite some developers publically proclaiming their love for the hard drive. Maybe they'd better start working out ways that their games can do without the unit... Right now it looks as though Sony are still considering their cost options. Including the drive would make the machine even better (obviously) but will push the price up. Perhaps they'll go for a dual format launch (like Xbox 360) one with a drive and one without? Right now though, even Sony are confused. More next month.

PLAYSTATION 3 ONLINE "HUB"

Phil Harrison called it the "PS Hub" and it's PS3's rival to Xbox Live, featuring friend lists, online gameplay, downloads and text and video chat. And (best bit) everything bar some downloads is free. This is great news after the balls-up they made of PS2 online.

PLAYSTATION 2 GAMES IN HIGH-DEF

Phil Harrison describes the process of upgrading your PS2 games as "optimisations". The effects might not be as simple as '*Metal Gear 3* in massive high-def' therefore. Expect something like PS2's ability to smooth and improve PSone game textures. Your PS2 games will look better on PS3. But how *much* better still isn't known.

"BEYOND THE BOX"

Phil Harrison takes to the stage at the Game Developer's Conference and spills new demos and facts.

March 22nd, 2006. Just days after Ken's page 12 revelations and minutes before we went to press, Phil Harrison (President of Worldwide Studios) took to the stage at the normally stuffy Game Developers Conference in San Jose and delivered another tantalising blast of PS3 fact.

There were two new tech demos, new game demos (most updates from the E3 May 2005 demos), a head-load of PS3 online fact and the confession that inclusion of a hard drive in the box from day one is NOT CONFIRMED! Read on...

Tech demos first. Number one featured the 'famous' PS3 ducks at the bottom of an ocean with shoals of fish (running in 1080p). The real star (and point of the demo) was the lighting. By looking up, we could see the sun shining on the surface, diffusing realistically under the waves. The sun was incredibly bright – "16,000 times brighter than anything else in the demo," Phil said – and it showed off PS3's dynamic lighting (the ability to create very light and very dark and everything in between) perfectly.

The second demo saw a camera track along the side of a shiny car ('it's from a forthcoming PS3 game', said Phil – read: *The Getaway*-style title shown at E3). The camera tracked back and a machine gun opened fire, peppering it with bullets – the damage, we were told, was calculated "procedurally". Paint flakes around the bullet holes, glass smashes and eventually the bumpers fall off, the bonnet flies away and the wheels drop off. Very nice.

NEW DEMOS

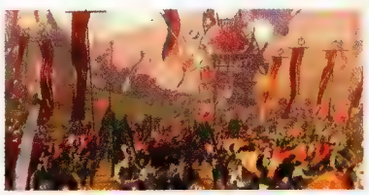
Here's the games Phil showed off:

RESISTANCE: FALL OF MAN (FORMERLY KNOW AS I-8)

This seems less of an 'alternative history' slant (old World War II fighters against invading Starship Troopers aliens) and more a straight 'repel an alien invasion with big guns in a War of the Worlds-style ruined city' theme in mind. Highlight? The inventive spear-raining bomb gun.

MOTORSTORM

New demo. Looks almost as good as the (fake?) demo from E3 2005. We saw buggies and motocross bikes racing through a rocky, danger-strewn desert while bikes and cars spewed mud up onto the cars behind, obscuring their view and making them fight to get out of deeply etched tyre tracks in the dirt and get around their opponents into the lead.



SONGSTAR

Not so much a demo as an announcement. Expect downloadable tracks and major use of the eyetoy camera. The potential for trans-global multi-player sing-offs are obvious.

WARHAWK

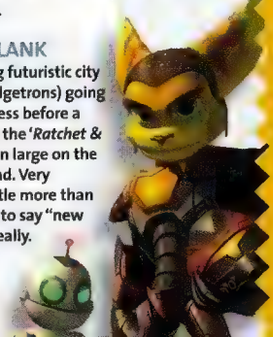
Shown fleetingly at E3 in 2005, we now have a demo that shows more of the massive battlefield the game promises. War rages below as you pilot a Warhawk fighter craft and – with help from the rest of your squad – fire missiles and bring down a vast enemy ship whose debris rains down onto the ground battle below. Impressive.

HEAVENLY SWORD

Looking very much like the demo from E3 2005, this turned out to be a real-time demo with the ability to stop and slow down the action and move the camera around. We were particularly impressed with one detail, where we could see a massive army on a distant hill and then zoom the camera right in and show off every tiny bit of a warrior's uniform.

RATCHET & CLANK

We saw a bustling futuristic city full of robots (Gadgetrons) going about their business before a huge airship with the '*Ratchet & Clank*' logo written large on the side flew over head. Very impressive but little more than a tech demo-way to say "new *Ratchet* on PS3" really. Still, eh?



EVERY PS3 GAME EVER

Absolutely every PS3 game that's been announced so far.

2 DAYS TO VEGAS Developer: Steel Monkeys
Urban crime-'em-up set across a vast urban sprawl.

ALAN WAKE Developer: Remedy
Creepy horror adventure from the creators of *Max Payne*.

CITY OF METRONONE Developer: Team Tarsier
Steampunk adventure game from French developers.

DEVIL MAY CRY 4 Developer: Capcom
The sequel to the hack and slash demon action game.

ELVEON Developer: In-House
An RPG that uses the amazing Unreal 3 graphics engine.

EYEDENTIFY Developer: Sony
Interact with two female secret agents with an EyeToy.

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3 Developer: EA
Gorgeous boxing sequel featuring amazing damage physics.

KILLZONE Developer: Guerilla
More FPS action with some amazing graphical effects.

I-8 Developer: Insomniac
The *Ratchet & Clank* developers try their hand at an FPS.

METAL GEAR SOLID 4: GUNS OF THE PATRIOTS
Developer: Konami
Need we say anything? Our most anticipated PS3 game.

MOTORSTORM Developer: Sony
Insane off-road racer with loads of vehicle types.

TEKKEN Developer: Namco
Next-gen beat-'em-up action from arcade masters Namco.

THE GETAWAY PS3 Developer: Sony
An entirely realistic depiction of London on PS3.

UNREAL TOURNAMENT 2007 Developer: Epic
This online FPS can support up to 36 players.

VISION GRAN TURISMO Developer: Sony
The most realistic driving game ever? Probably.

WARHAWK Developer: Incog
Futuristic war on an absolutely massive scale.

6 GUN II Developer: Battleborne
A third-person tactical combat game set in the future.

DARK SECTOR Developer: Digital Extremes
A gloomy FPS that features amazing lighting effects.

THE DARKNESS Developer: Starbreeze
This horror FPS is based on a famous comic book.

FIFTH PHANTOM SAGA Developer: Sega
An FPS from Sega featuring weird futuristic robots.

FINAL FANTASY VII REMAKE Developer: Square Enix
The long-awaited remake of the best RPG ever made.

FORMULA ONE PS3 Developer: Sony
Expect an insanely accurate simulation of F1 racing.

HEAVENLY SWORD Developer: Ninja Theory
This stunning martial arts game is a PS3 exclusive.

KILLING DAY Developer: Ubisoft
French FPS with loads of destructible environments.

MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM Developer: Bandai
Massive robot war based on the famous anime series.

NI-OH Developer: Koei
Action game based on a script by Akira Kurosawa.

OMIKRON 2 Developer: Quantic Dream
The sequel to the PC game from the *Fahrenheit* team.

POSSESSION Developer: Blitz
This comedy horror game lets you take control of zombies.

SHADOWCLAN Developer: Tiger Hill
John Woo presents an action game set in New York City.

LAIR Developer: Factor 5
This strange beat-'em-up features scrapping dragons.

RAINBOW SIX VEGAS Developer: Ubisoft
The team head to Vegas to take out terrorists.

PROJECT OFFSET Developer: Sony
An epic fantasy RPG/FPS with sublime graphics.

PROJECT IM Developer: Zero Point
A dark FPS featuring gas-mask-wearing soldiers.

UNTOLD LEGENDS: DARK KINGDOM Developer: Sony
This action RPG is based on Sony's PSP title.

SPLINTER CELL: DOUBLE AGENT Developer: Ubisoft
The glorious next-gen version of the stealth game.

STRANGLEHOLD Developer: Midway
John Woo-approved action game starring Chow Yun-Fat.

ALONE IN THE DARK Developer: Atari
Next-gen sequel to the classic horror adventure.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG Developer: Sega
The hedgehog strikes back for yet another sequel.

BROTHERS IN ARMS 3 Developer: Ubisoft
The tactical WW2 FPS aims its sights at PS3.

WAY OF THE SAMURAI 3 Developer: Spike
The free-roaming samurai adventure makes its return.

BOMBERMAN: ACT ZERO Developer: Hudson Soft
The bombing man gets a radical cyborg makeover on PS3.

RESIDENT EVIL 5 Developer: Capcom
One of the most hotly-anticipated sequels ever.

FATAL INERTIA Developer: Koei
Futuristic racing game featuring hovering space cars.

MAKAI WARS Developer: Nippon Ichi
Strategy RPG based on the PSone game *Makai Kingdom*.

GRADIUS Developer: Konami
The classic retro shooter returns for the next-gen.

CRYSIS Developer: Crytek
Amazing FPS from the developers behind *Far Cry*.

REDWOOD FALLS Developer: Kuju
Secret project that is apparently very gory indeed.

RUMBLE ROSES XX Developer: Konami
Sexy female wrestling game from Konami. Oh, yes.

MEDAL OF HONOR: AIRBORNE Developer: EA
The next in EA's accurate WW2 FPS saga.

CALL OF DUTY 3 Developer: Activision
And more painstakingly accurate WW2 action.

NBA BASKETBALL Developer: EA
As you'd expect, EA are doing an NBA game on PS3.

PLAYSTATION 3: THE GAMES

The very latest screenshots and info from the newest PlayStation 3 games.

FINAL FANTASY VII COMES TO PS3

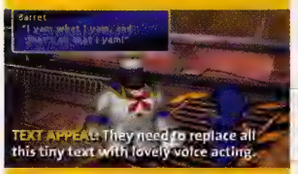
If the prez of Square Enix is to be believed – and why wouldn't he be? – legendary PSone RPG *Final Fantasy VII* is bound for PS3.

At last year's E3, Sony revealed a short tech demo that re-created the gorgeous opening FMV of *Final Fantasy VII* using PS3 hardware. They've been knocking rumours back left, right and centre that a remake is in the works, claiming it was merely an example of the machine's power. Until now that is. At the Japanese launch event for *Final Fantasy XII*, Square Enix president Yoichi Wada was asked if a PS3 version of the PSone classic was planned. He responded by smiling and telling press that a remake was "likely with such high demand". We've been a bit wary of the number of *FFVII* spin-offs they have planned, but we can't help but get excited about a next generation remake. The game still shames many current-gen games with its amazing plot, peerless design and vast scale.

PS4 RECKONS *We'd genuinely play it all again, if only to see our favourite locations in glorious 3D. Just think of how amazing the Golden Saucer will look. If you want an idea of what the visuals will be like, check out Advent Children, the DVD and UMD movie from Square Enix based around the story of FFVII. Imagine the amazing story of the game told with the stunning graphics of the movie. PS3 has the power to make it happen.*

CHANGE IS GOOD

For all its greatness, a lot of *FFVII* is now a bit long in tooth. So what can Square do to make their remake ace? Well, for one, they should get some voice actors involved because the PSone game was text-based. We just hope our image of the characters isn't destroyed by the hammy US actors Square Enix seem so fond of. The menus and combat needs tweaking too. *Kingdom Hearts II* is a good example of a game with a hugely user-friendly and easy to organize inventory and the advances that *Final Fantasy XII* is making in turn-based combat should be utilized in the new *VII* please. Otherwise, everything else should be left respectfully unmauled, thanks.

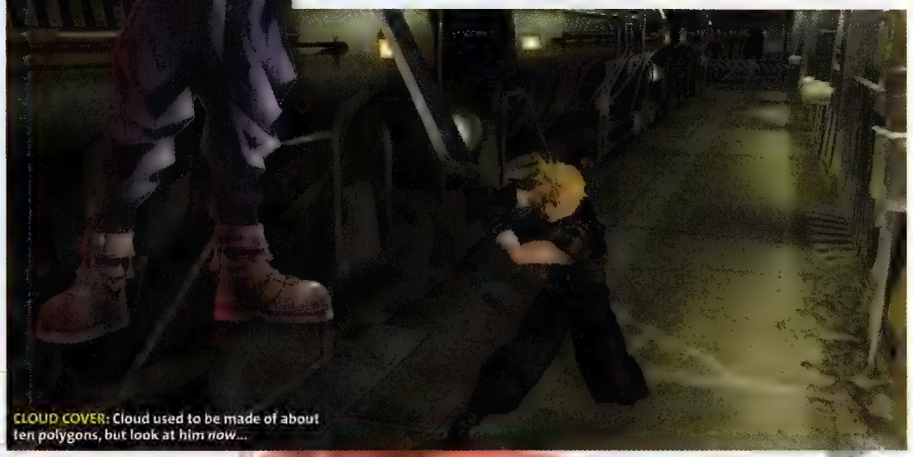


TEXT APPEAL: They need to replace all this tiny text with lovely voice acting.

FIGHT FOR YOUR RIGHT: The modern combat of *FFXII* should be used.

HEART TO HEART: *KH* is a good example of how to streamline an RPG.

WHO NEW: On PSone, scenes like these had to be pre-rendered but PS3 can do it all in real-time.



CLOUD COVER: Cloud used to be made of about ten polygons, but look at him *now*...

"WE CAN'T HELP BUT GET EXCITED ABOUT FFVII ON PS3"

FIRE WALKER: Don't fret, these screenshots are from a *really* early version of the game.

"EXPECT THE FINISHED PRODUCT TO LOOK A WHOLE LOT SEXIER"

CRATE TO BE HERE: What's in this crate? We think it's either a magical hat or an axe.

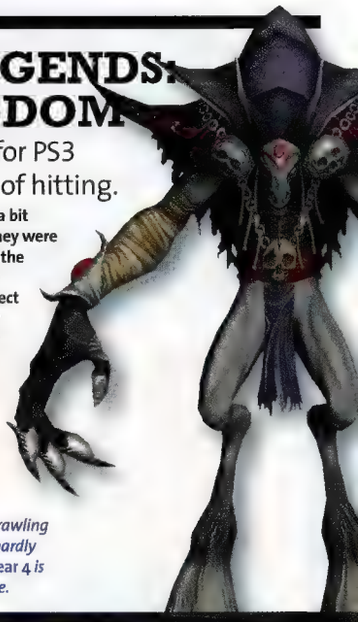
PSM2 PLAYSTATION 3
UK NOVEMBER 2006
THE FACTS. THE GAMES. THE FUTURE.

UNTOLD LEGENDS: DARK KINGDOM

Sony's PSP RPG lunges for PS3 with its magical sword of hitting.

OK, so these shots make it look a bit arse, but do bear in mind that they were taken from a very, very early version of the game. And, trust us, the developers are *furious* that they've been released. Expect the finished product to look altogether sexier. Details are thin but we do know that the game will feature an original story penned by the authors of the Dungeons & Dragons books and you'll be able to play as one of three character classes – a brute, a mage and a scout. *Untold Legends* will also feature online play.

PSM RECKONS *The PSP game had its moments and the accessible dungeon-crawling action should translate well to PS3. It's hardly the technical powerhouse that* Metal Gear 4 *is but we reckon it'll be decent all the same.*



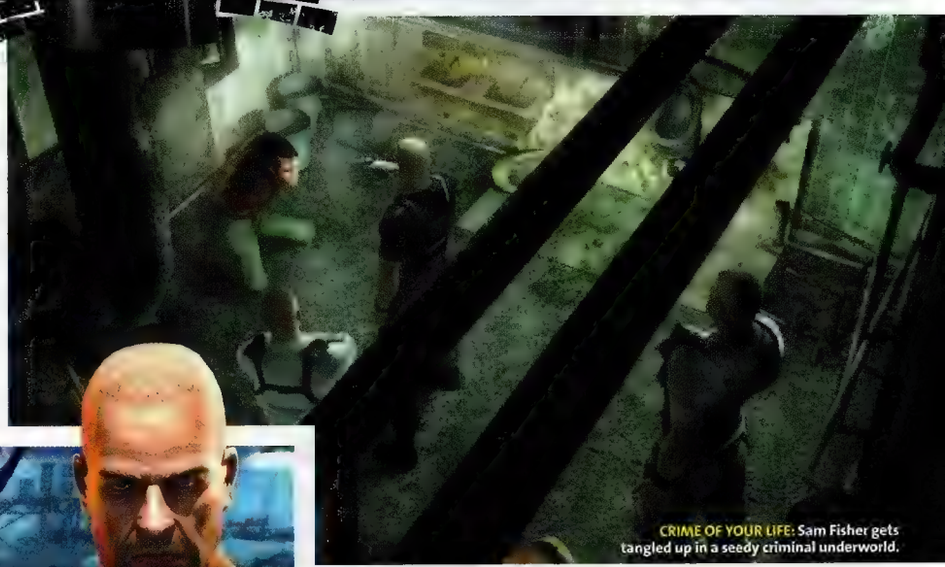
TEEN WOLF: Smashing up monsters will make up a pretty substantial chunk of the game.

SPLINTER CELL: DOUBLE AGENT PS3

Sam Fisher is back and he's in prison. And he's bald.

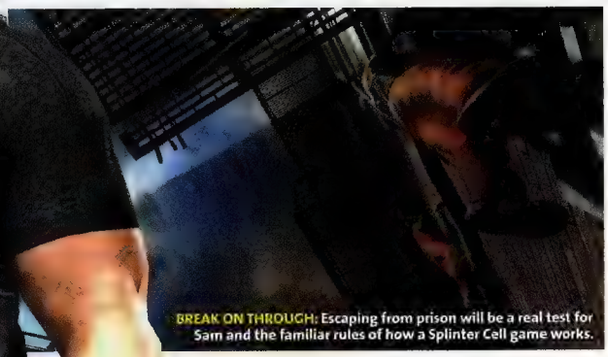
This new *Splinter Cell* game is taking a huge change of direction. This time, Sam is in prison, working with criminals. Blimey, you think you know someone... But is all as it seems? He may seem like a bad guy, but he's actually playing the baddies for his own needs and for the greater good. These new screenshots show glorious next-gen Sam in action, escaping from prison, dealing with thuggish bad guys and creeping around with his trademark tri-ocular goggles. So this is very much a game of two halves, with you playing as both the 'criminal' version of Sam and the stealthy special operative we all know and love.

PSM RECKONS Splinter Cell: Double Agent *will feature sneaking, sniping and the daring feats that Sam Fisher is so capable of, including jumping between trains and scaling icy cliffs. There are also levels where you must help a girl called Erica and lead her to safety* Ico*-style. Don't expect a windmill, though. This ought to be everything the older* Cell *games were and the extra power of PS3 finally lets the game cut loose.*



CRIME OF YOUR LIFE: Sam Fisher gets tangled up in a seedy criminal underworld.

FAR AND WIDE: These are the biggest levels we've ever seen in a 3C game.



BREAK ON THROUGH: Escaping from prison will be a real test for Sam and the familiar rules of how a Splinter Cell game works.

Accelerator

SCANDALOUS GOSSIP. INSIDER DIRT. ZERO BULLSHIT

PSM2 PLAYSTATION 2 UK NOVEMBER 2006
THE FACTS. THE GAMES. THE FUTURE.

RAINBOW SIX VEGAS

Ubisoft take a gamble and release another *Rainbow Six* game. But this time it's packing PS3...

Las Vegas has been besieged by nasty foreign terrorists. The solution? A brand new squad of Rainbow Six soldiers armed with high-tech tools and guns. Set among the neon glare of the city of sins, your task is to take out the terrorists and save America from nuclear disaster.

PSM RECKONS *Chances of GTA-style gambling minigames remain slim, although you will get to tackle a streamlined new squad command system and use futuristic anti-terrorist technology, including tiny 'snake' cameras you can push through cracks and doors to stare at enemies.*

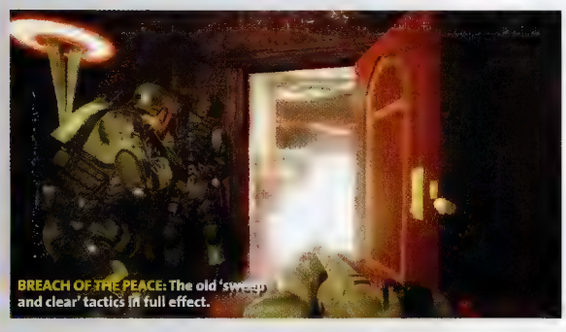
SMART GUY: Use your wits and your guns to get one over the terrorists. Or blow them up.

STOP, LOOK AND LISTEN

Rainbow Six rewards patience and planning. For example, before you charge into where hostages are being held, it helps to abseil down the side of the building and peer through the windows first. Suss out how many guards there are, where the hostage is and then deal with the situation as you see fit. A lot of the game takes place indoors, in casinos and offices. There'll also be a level set atop the massive Las Vegas Stratosphere tower. Home of the rollercoaster that made Nathan barf.

TAKE A GAMBLE: The neon-drenched Vegas casinos will make it difficult to hide.

"TAKE OUT THE TERRORISTS AND SAVE AMERICA"



BREACH OF THE PEACE: The old 'sweep and clear' tactics in full effect.

PS3 EXTRA!

ELVEON

An elf-heavy fantasy RPG that uses the gorgeous Unreal 3 game engine.

PROJECT OFFSET

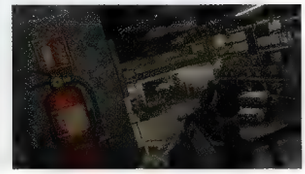
Another fantasy game, this time in the guise of a medieval first-person shooter.

THE OUTSIDER

Created by Elite designer David Braben, this political action/thriller is set in Washington DC and sees the lead character on the run from shady government organizations, including the CIA. Intriguing stuff.

PROJECT IM

This mysterious FPS has been created by a Danish company and, er, that's all they've told us. Full of robots, which, in our experience is never a bad thing.



LESS IS ROAR: Look at those graphics. And everyone loves dragons, right? Yes.

LAIR

A dragon 'simulator' that features some truly amazing visuals.

The trailer we've seen for this dragon-'em-up opens with the words "this trailer is comprised entirely of in-game footage" before exploding with some stunning visuals. A giant dragon atop a cliff in the pouring rain and flexes its big dragon muscles before lunging at another and clawing at its face. We don't know for sure, but all signs point to this being some kind of reptile-based beat-'em-up. Erk.

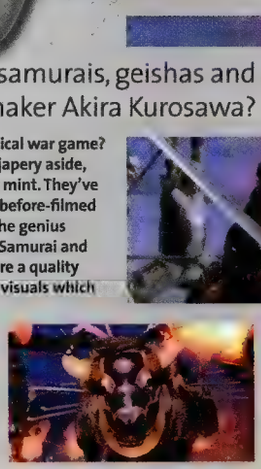
PSM RECKONS *As with* Untold Legends, Lair *will feature online play. A scene in the trailer shows thousands of dragons lining the sky. Can we expect mass dragon warfare on a grand scale with hundreds of other players?*

NI-OH

Large-scale war, samurais, geishas and a story written by filmmaker Akira Kurosawa? Mmm...

Koei? Making a historical war game? Noooo! But hilarious japery aside, this could actually be pretty mint. They've based the game on a never-before-filmed script of Akira Kurosawa's, the genius behind films like The Seven Samurai and Yojimbo, which should ensure a quality story – and then there's the visuals which look monstrously good.

PSM RECKONS *Slicing through hundreds of men with swords is fundamentally fun. Especially when it's being rendered in real-time on a PS3. Count us in.*



SLICE AND DICE: We thought we were tired of Japanese war games, but this sounds amazing.

DOOM

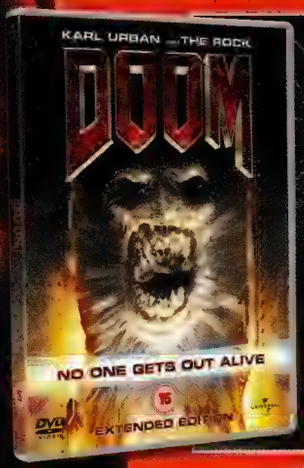
THIS TIME, IT'S MORE THAN A GAME

The original and downright awesome first-person shooter *Doom* is heading to a DVD store near you. And this time it's former wrestler-turned-action hero, The Rock who's getting to grips with the Big F***g Gun.**

Doom sees a crack squad of kick ass troops heading into the murky depths of Mars to investigate a lab which has just been locked down. Why? Well, let's just say it's not because the heating's packed in. In fact, as the team stumble across the cause, the temperature's about to reach boiling point...

While Hollywood could've easily ballsed-up this legendary series, they've improved it. The big-budget special effects, pacey action and intertwining character stories add more life to the franchise than ever before – and watch out for the scene delivered in an FPS-style. It's just like the blood and guts gunplay you know and love. And that's not the only similarity. You'll twitch nervously in your seat, never quite knowing what's around the next corner. What was that shadow? Where are those glowing orbs coming from? It's exhilarating stuff, and the massive twist towards the end will have you spitting out your bagel. And when Doom goes a little bit Matrix with a high-flying fist fight, you'll be whooping for more. If you love Doom and are partial to outrageous action, then this movie is a must.

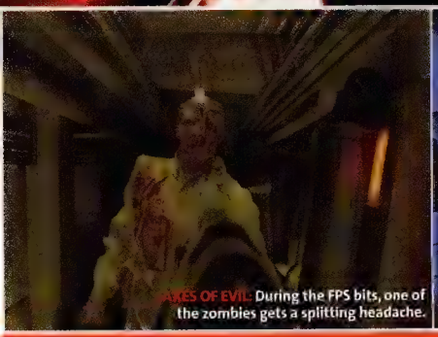
THOSE ABOUT TO ROCK: Hmm. Pretty tough. Our money's still on the aliens though.



STAR TURN: All your old favourites from the games are re-created for real.

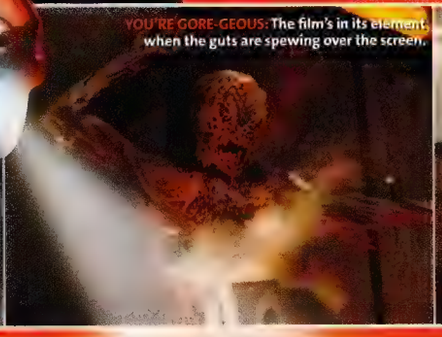
HELL BREAKS LOOSE ON 03/04/06

DOOM AVAILABLE ON DVD AND UMD

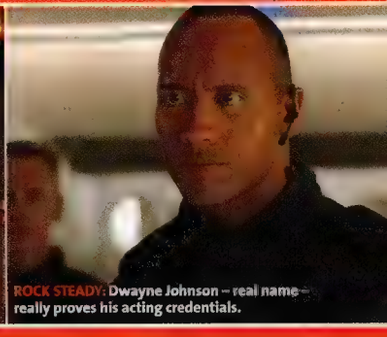


AXES OF EVIL: During the FPS bits, one of the zombies gets a splitting headache.

LIGHT GUN ACTION: You never quite know where the next alien will pop up from.



YOU'RE GORE-GEOUS: The film's in its element when the guts are spewing over the screen.



ROCK STEADY: Dwayne Johnson – real name – really proves his acting credentials.

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Accelerator

SCANDALOUS GOSSIP, INSIDER DIRT, ZERO BULLSHIT

PS3: WHAT WE STILL NEED TO KNOW...

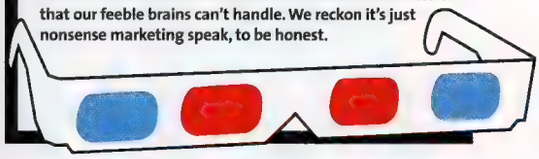
How much? Where's the controller? What's 4D gaming? Here's everything Sony haven't told us. But need to fast...

SO ONLINE PLAY IS FREE, BUT HOW MUCH WILL EVERYTHING ELSE COST?

It won't cost you anything to play a game against an online rival but other things like downloading demos, games and other content like films and music might. How much will these micro-transactions cost? Will it be mere pence as demonstrated in programs like iTunes or will Sony shaft us?

JUST WHAT *IS* THE "FOURTH DIMENSION" OF GAMING?

Sony have said that playing PS3 is a "4D" experience, but what does that actually mean? Well, er, we wish we knew. A scour of science websites proves that 4D space is possible, but it involves dozens of calculations and various other factors that our feeble brains can't handle. We reckon it's just nonsense marketing speak, to be honest.



HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

Our educated guess is £399, but it could be more. £449? Ouch. And if they start to approach £500 then they might as well make it £50,000,000 because nobody will be able to afford it. Get in the right frame of mind to deal with £399. That's our bet.

WHAT WILL THE START SCREEN BE LIKE?

This might seem like a stupid question, but how many times have you seen PS2's opening screen? Thousands of times. What will we be seeing for the next six years before we fire up *Metal Gear Solid 4*? We predict a dancing baby rendered in stunning 3D who explodes to form the letters 'PS3'. Please let it be so. Sod all that though – what about the sound? We hum the PS2 noise every time it boots up. What will we hum for PS3? We imagine it'll be like Aphex Twin having a panic attack in a room full of synthesizers. In a wind tunnel. In space.

HOW DO I GET MY PS2 SAVES ONTO MY PS3?

The hard drive in PS3 means that memory cards for regular play are rendered obsolete. The Memory Stick Duo slot will let you carry saves from machine to machine so maybe you can use your PSP stick? There's also the possiblity of saving games to your slot of the Sony server and download them anywhere. And we think Sony will let you connect your PS2 and your PS3 with a USB cable so you can transfer your data over. Sounds like a pain, but you'll only ever have to do it once.

CAN YOU UPGRADE THE HARD DRIVE FOR EXTRA STORAGE?

Will 60gb actually be enough? If we're downloading games, hi-def films (30Gb apiece) and everything else Sony are promising, will the space dry up with prolonged use? If so, will we be able to upgrade to a better model? We hope so, 'cos all those saves and music and movies will eat up those gigs *fast*.

HOW MUCH WILL THE GAMES COST?

Are we going to be paying over the usual £40 for a PS3 games? Blu-ray discs cost more to produce, which could make the games more expensive. And – let's face it – Sony know you'll pay premium price for a red hot new PS3 title so get ready to pay a juicy £49.99 apiece for your launch games.

WHAT WILL THE CONTROLLER LOOK LIKE?

We've all seen the sex fetish banana pad, but it's common knowledge that it's an early prototype. What will the final hardware look like? And how much will the costly wireless bits make them? And will there be cheaper wired controllers? Tell us, Sony!

WILL IT LOOK OK ON MY TELLY?

If you don't have a top-of-the-range plasma the size of the moon, will PS3 still look good on your fair-to-middling year-old telly? Well, judging by Xbox 360 you'll be fine. You just won't get to see it as clear as it could be but it'll still look a whole lot more impressive than your PS2.

WHAT DO THE COMPETITION THINK?

What do Nintendo and Microsoft think of the PS3 announcement? Beware: sweating, chest-beating and buck-passing ahead.

Nintendo

"THE DIRECTION WE ARE TAKING IS DIFFERENT TO PS3..."

...claims Mario creator and Ninty legend Shigeru Miyamoto.

"We don't see it as a competition between the two consoles, although the customers always do. It depends on what expectations people have of the PS3 and Revolution. Sony has taken a long time to create their machine but it is obvious that the direction we are taking is different to the PS3. Our competitors are talking about beefed-up graphics and better technology. We could fight in that area but we think it is not necessary and we would rather focus on what Nintendo do uniquely."

PSM RECKONS *We agree they're in different markets – mainly because they'd get bludgeoned head-on. Nintendo are producing an ingenious, cheap, but relatively low-powered games console, while Sony are concentrating on power, multimedia content and online connectivity – and a crazy price. Sony will still have all the big franchises, but Nintendo will chuck up some innovative gems. We'll honestly probably buy both.*

XBOX 360

"I AM OPTIMISTIC. I THINK WE ARE ABSOLUTELY IN THE GAME."

...booms Microsoft CEO and Xbox guru Steve Ballmer

"In every other generation, the first guy to 10 million consoles was the number one seller in the generation. Did we just get an even better opportunity to be the first guy to 10 million? Yeah, of course we did. Is Xbox 360 is on target to sell five million units by June? We're sort-of on track. It would've been nice at Christmas to have one for everyone who wanted one. Sony's going to try and define Blu-ray as a fundamental battleground, but I don't think it is a fundamental battleground. I don't care whether it's Blu-ray or HD-DVD, there's not going to be a lot of content in either format this year."

PSM RECKONS *We've got big love for Ballmer, but for different reasons. We'd never stoop so low to discredit a rival with cheap shots, but luckily, Steve's already done it for us. See below for how seriously to take Xbox 360's, er,* energetic *cheerleader.*

DO THE BALLMER!

Ah, we love Steve Ballmer. And he loves Microsoft. And dancing. This is Steve's infamous 'Developers' dance from the Microsoft, er, Developers Conference in late 2001.

STEP ONE: Clap. Clap like the wind. Clap like war.

STEP TWO: "1... 2...3...". Point. Chant. Laser hands.

STEP THREE: Go! Go! Like a jacked-up frikkin' seal!

STEP FOUR: Pound fist. Fist. Fist! FIST! Claa-aap!

STEP FIVE: Sweat. Chant. Sweat. Chant. Swe... ugh!

STEP SIX: Pain. Sweat. A glowing tunnel... [dies]

See Steve do the Ballmer by visiting http://video.google.com/videosearch?q=steve+ballmer

NEXT MONTH

PLAYSTATION 3 WORLD EXCLUSIVE!

What happens when the PS2's best shooter collides with the world's most powerful console?

Find out next month only in PSM2 as Free Radical, the developers of *TimeSplitters* reveal their stunning PS3 debut. It's a game so secret it hasn't even got a *name* yet!

PLUS!

The world's first review of *FFXII!* We're playing it now... and it's amazing!

DO NOT MISS IT!

ISSUE 76 ON SALE MAY 4TH

HOW TO GET YOUR FREE GAME FOR YOUR MOBILE PHONE!*

YOU PLAY, WE PAY!

Brand new and brilliant games – FREE with PSM2. Take your pick and grab one of three solid gold classics for your mobile!

TOMB RAIDER

Lara Croft and her iconic pair (of pistols) have discovered an exciting new world of adventure – on your mobile! This action romp boasts 15 levels of ruins for you to explore, each packed with death-dealing traps and fabulous treasures. The fluid platforming and satisfying controls prove this ain't no shallow bimbo – if you're up for a challenge, Lara's your girl!

eidos

CANNON FODDER

If you like your action shot through with strategy then *Cannon Fodder* is for you. Your aim is to guide a tiny band of brothers through more than 20 enemy-infested missions. But don't expect to just blast your way to victory – you need to use your brains to figure out how best to use the machine guns, grenades and bazookas at your disposal. War has never been so much fun!

kuju

ATARI LEGENDS VOL 3

Retro games can be a bit of mixed bag but you won't need to put on your rose-tinted specs here – this latest raid on Atari's vaults has produced a trio of cast-iron classics that are just as fun now as you remember them way back when. Pick and mix from either bat-n'-ball legend *Pong*, brick-bashing spectacular Super *Breakout* or the rock-blocking beats of *Asteroids Deluxe*. Groovy!

ATARI

iFONE

Just choose one of the three titles above then text **PSM2** to **62344**.
Check out the 'How It Works' panel for more information if you need it...

HOW IT WORKS:

Just follow these simple steps to your FREE* mobile game!

Just text psm2 to 62344. We'll send you a FREE message containing the link you need to download the PSM2 service. So far so good and it just gets better from here.

Got a message from us? Select 'Yes' if prompted to download the service. Having problems? Check out 'Frequently Asked Questions' at www.mad4games.com for answers.

Use the service to check compatibility, choose your free game, and get access to hot content, compos and news whenever you want. And that's it – just as simple as pie.

NO SUBSCRIPTIONS! NO WORRIES!

No need for you to worry about any sneaky subscriptions – there aren't any! And our unique system checks automatically to make sure you can only get a game that works on your phone. It's an absolute cinch!

MAD 4 GAMES

TERMS AND CONDITIONS: Usage of the PSM2 browser service is subject to GPRS coverage, handset capability and network availability. A full list of compatible handsets is published in the FAQ at www.mad4games.com. At peak times, SMS traffic may be subject to network delay. Your phone must be WAP enabled and able to run Java games. Once connected, the service will check product compatibility with your phone. If you need assistance on connection or other issues, text HELP to 62344. *We do NOT charge you for the service, but usage requires a short WAP and/or data connection for which your operator may charge at your normal rate. Core, Lara Croft and Tomb Raider are registered Trademarks of Core Design Limited. Eidos and the Eidos logo are trademarks of Eidos Limited. All rights reserved. Cannon Fodder © 2004 The Codemasters Software Company Limited ("Codemasters"). All rights reserved. "Cannon Fodder" is a registered trademark of Sensible Limited. Used under license by Codemasters. "Codemasters"® and the Codemasters logo are registered trademarks owned by Codemasters. "GENIUS AT PLAY"™ is a trademark of Codemasters. Atari Legends: Vol. 3 comprising Asteroids® Deluxe™, Super Breakout® and Pong® © 2006 Atari Interactive, Inc. All rights reserved. ASTEROIDS, SUPER BREAKOUT, PONG and ATARI word marks and logos are the trademarks or registered trademarks of Atari Interactive, Inc. or its affiliates in the US and other territories. Used with permission. Produced and published by iFone under license from Atari, Inc. By using the service, you agree to abide by the terms and conditions published therein and at www.mad4g.com. Offer expires 6th May 2006.

GOD OF WAR 2: PLOT SPILLED?

By the gods! Kratos is back and this time he has *wings*.

Shocking? Not really. You only had to finish *God Of War* to know they were making a sequel (see 'Story: Revealed'), but Kratos' latest masks a potentially killer twist.

Rumour? Greek god Kratos will be facing off against the *Roman* gods. The sequel gives the developers a chance to use ideas scrapped from the last game including Icarus wings (for flying scraps), plus the ability to ride Pegasus and wield the Golden Fleece. Aces.

PSM RECKONS *Okay, so it doesn't look that different, but we're promised brutal new combos (eye ripping... eugh), intelligent puzzles (hear that Tomb Raider?) and battles with Cyclops, Cerebus and a Flying Gryphon. You can use enemies' weapons against them; grabbing their swords with your chain and swinging it at their neck. On the flip side, baddies now work in teams. If you grab a giant beast with your chain a smaller enemy might knock it away. In one scene you'll be fighting atop a massive eagle as it flies through the air. (Shadow Of The Colossus fifth boss, anyone.) This will be amazing, even if we secretly wished it'd turn up on PS3, not the sturdy old PS2, in February 2007 in the UK.*

BODY OGRE: The cyclops' have riders which need to be killed to initiate an eye-stabbing minigame.

HANGING TOUGH: Kratos uses his powerful arms to climb under objects.

STORY REVEALED!

Back in PSM2#64, we uncovered the plot for *God of War 2* – unlocked as a hidden movie when you finish the game. Turns out, Kratos (the bald child below), was forced to abandon his brother (cowering behind) to protect him, but he ends up blaming Kratos, turns evil – we don't know how yet – and vows revenge.

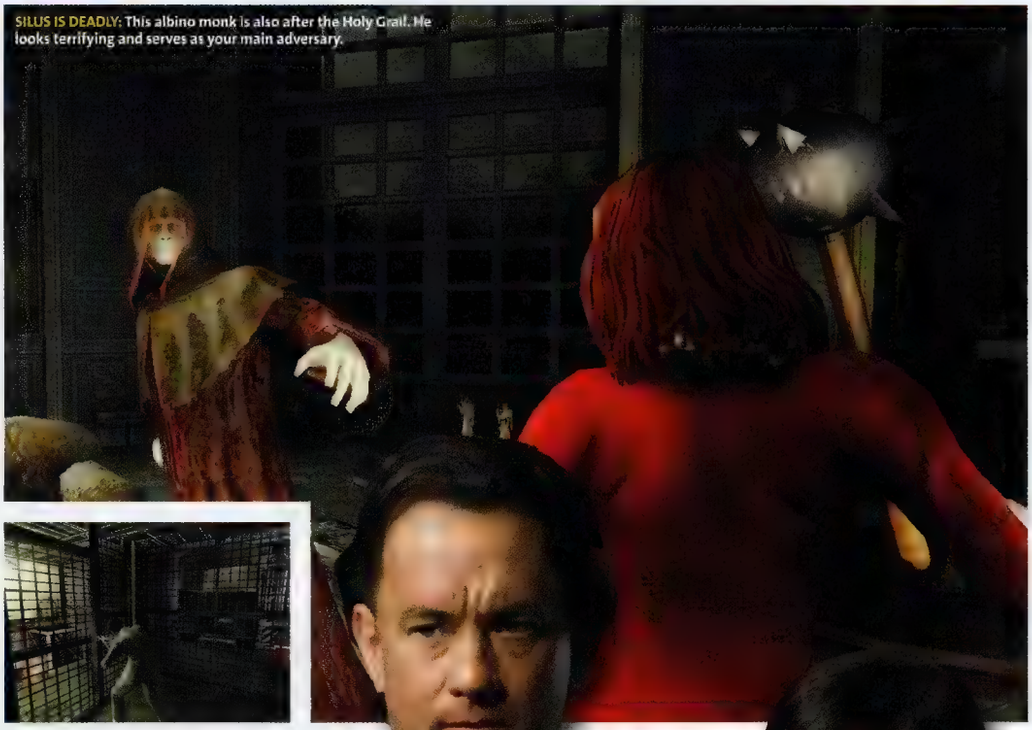
BLADE TO LAST: Kratos is still a god, and madder than Ares.

THE DA VINCI CODE

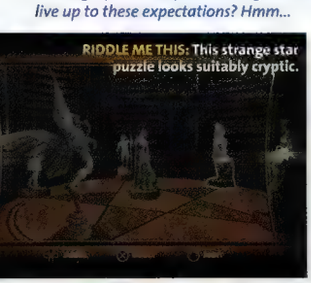
Worthy novel adaptation or just on the Code to nowhere...?

Based on the gazillion-selling book by author Dan Brown, this adventure game revolves around the code-cracking exploits of John Langdon, an academic who is on the run from the fuzz, accused of murder. Along with sexy code breaker Sophie Neveu, your goal is to solve puzzles, clear your name and find the mysterious Holy Grail. You do this by making your way around the globe following clues left by the man you're accused of killing. Only things get (more) complicated when a creepy albino monk called Silus starts to pursue Sophie and yourself. From the looks of things the game shares a lot in common with *Fahrenheit*, although the subject matter is nowhere near as dark or as action-orientated. That's not to say there won't be *some* action as well, though – as well as solving puzzles you'll have to outrun the police and avoid other baddies into the bargain.

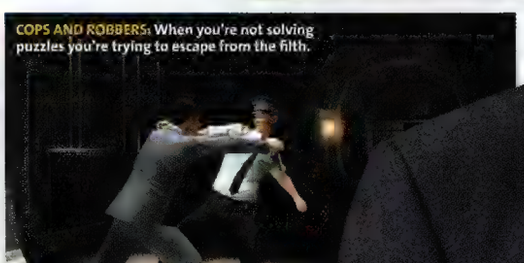
PSM RECKONS *Intriguing puzzles, a massively strong story and gorgeous, realistic visuals should ensure the* Da Vinci Code*'s success as a game. Will it match the popularity of the film or the book? Probably not, but it might still be good. We're looking forward to uncovering the secrets of the twisting* Broken Sword*-style conspiracy and exploring the gorgeous art galleries and cathedrals of Europe. Developers The Collective have proven their design skills with the excellent* Marc Ecko's Getting Up *so we expect nothing less than greatness from this. Will it live up to these expectations? Hmm...*



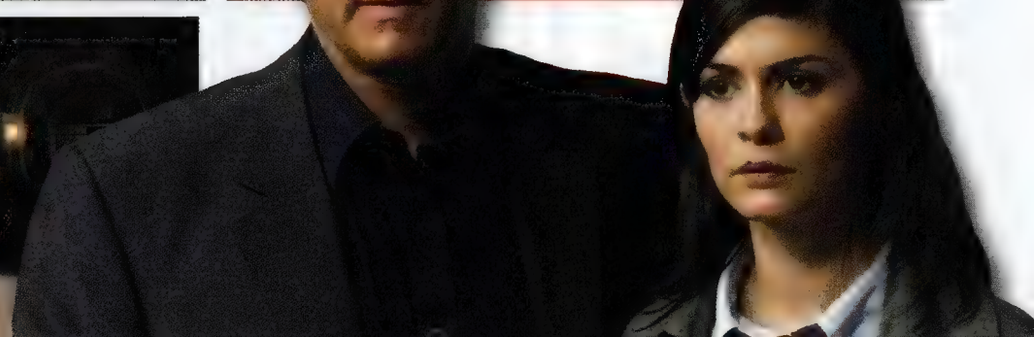
SILUS IS DEADLY: This albino monk is also after the Holy Grail. He looks terrifying and serves as your main adversary.



RIDDLE ME THIS: This strange star puzzle looks suitably cryptic.



COPS AND ROBBERS: When you're not solving puzzles you're trying to escape from the filth.



WINNING ELEVEN 10

Forget FIFA – now you can play the World Cup in the Japanese *Pro Evo*.

On April 27th – three months earlier than scheduled – we'll be hands-on with *Winning Eleven 10* (the Japanese *PES6*).

Why? Konami are tackling EA head-on (in Japan at least), with an International Challenge mode – i.e. World Cup *PES*. Expect new African teams, Togo, Ghana, Trinidad and one other, plus licensed clubs including Rosenberg, Club Brugge and Celtic.

PSM RECKONS *We're intrigued by the new 'Matthews Trick' (that's Stanley Matthews), a sort of feet-swapping shimmy. Ref AI is improved, with better use of the advantage rule. Master League player growth can be toggled on/off, with greater emphasis on player emotions, skills and reactions – i.e. players' feel more unique. Expect a fully-licensed England team, too – and a review in PSM2#76.*

THE DO RON RON: There's a new over-the-top lofted volley, plus trick and shot animations.

SORRY
Apologies to everyone who turned up to play us online on Feb 27th (Dan D was sick). Check www.myspace.com/psm2 for new times.

DROG BACK: The Chelsea striker demonstrates the Matthews move.

FOOT-BRAWL

Can *Winning Eleven 10* (aka *PES6*) stand up in the face of 2006's up-and-coming footie games? Probably, but the competition's heating up. A bit.

WORLD SOCCER CLIMAX

THE FACTS: With over 7000 real player names and 400 teams, Sega's arcade footy game certainly looks good on paper. The camera zooms into the action when you just have the keeper to beat, allowing you to use your skills to skip past the goalie.

PSM RECKONS *We're not entirely convinced by its innovative (read: ludicrous) one-on-one mode. We'll reserve judgement until we've played it, but it sounds like a pointless gimmick.*

SENSIBLE SOCCER

THE FACTS: The big-headed retro footballers are back. The high-scoring action has been spruced up with 3D visuals and a control system that allows you to curl home 30-yard screamers. Just like the good old days, eh?

PSM RECKONS *Hellooooo, Grandad. Although Sensi delivers old-school footballing can you cope with a grand total of zero licensed teams or players? In a word – no.*

2006 FIFA WORLD CUP GERMANY

THE FACTS: Shock news just in: It's going to boast all the correct stadiums, teams and advertising licenses. And a painfully trendy soundtrack, we should think.

PSM RECKONS *We're not banking on any huge improvements on FIFA 06. That said, when it comes to a totally locked-in, super-authentic recreation of the world cup event (rather than the actual sport of football) it'll once again be unbeatable. It might be good, but, well, it won't be PES, put it that way.*

FIVE THINGS WE WANT TO SEE IN...

FAMILY GUY

It's Peter Griffin and Brian on PS2. Yes, literally.

1. We're torn between a shoot 'em-up featuring the spacecraft that Stewie uses to destroy Peter's sperm (Series 3, Episode 12) or a Bemani cheerleading game, again starring the oval-headed megalomaniac. (Series 3, Episode 15). Ah, let's have both.
2. Taking on the vicious Chumba-Wumbas (think Oompa-Loompas) in the Pawtucket Brewery, from an episode which spoofs Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.
3. A Glenn Quagmire rhythm action sex game. Giggedy-giggedy goo.
4. Chasing the greased-up naked deaf [illegible] through the woods.
5. Wheelchair-bound Joe Swanson competing in a *Track And Field*-style Paralym[illegible].

FAMILY GUY: THE PS2 GAME

It's being developed by High Voltage, of Leisure Suit Larry fame as a comedy/adventure game, with bemani sections. We've seen a bit with Brian escaping prison, and the jokes are easily as harsh as the show.

HAVE YOU WON A COPY OF ONIMUSHA: DAWN OF DREAMS?

Are you one of the lucky 30 to receive a free game?

If you found a copy of *Onimusha: Dawn of Dreams* in this mag's bag then you're one of 30 lucky winners who'll be slicing and dicing the night away with Capcom's monstrously good demon-infested sequel to one of our favourite ever games. If you didn't, well, you really should consider buying it. If you'll remember, we called it "overblown and chaotic" in issue 73. So if you're a winner, well done! You've netted a perfectly good game for free. Aren't we nice to you? Yes, we are.

NEWS BITES

"TROOPER SCOOPER"

ROGUE TROOPER

Playing as Rogue, this third-person adventure stokes up memories of *Freedom Fighters* – what with its large-scale battlefield blowing up around you as you save your AI buddies. But the ones you can't help (named Gunnar, Helm and Bagman) become the tools of your trade as you attach their battle chips (they're all genetically modified soldiers, each with a special chip in their brains designed to be re-used after death. *Obviously*) into your kit to upgrade items. So you could install Gunnar into your rifle, prop him up on a tripod and use him as a self-aware gun-turret. It's all very open-ended, meaning you can go in gung-ho or employ stealthy tactics. Review next issue.

"MIDWAY BOARDS PS3"

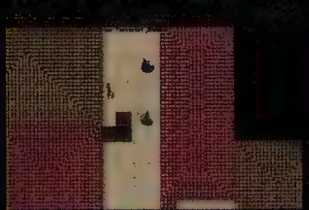
AREA 52 SLIPS UNDER RADAR

While Midway's recent Gamer's Day event in sunny LA was fairly predictable – one pasty journalist had a *nosebleed* mid-conference (you couldn't make it up) – MD David Zucker let slip that the company were working on an ambitious next-gen (PS3) version of sci-fi shooter *Area 51*. Great. Slightly less remarkable was *Spy Hunter: Nowhere to Run* (on-foot bits wonky, and Rock's grapple moves a bit hammy), *MK: Armageddon* (solid, exhaustive, but... you sort-of played it two years ago) and new franchise *TNA Wrestling* ("Tits 'n' Ass" tittered one journo). On the bright side, *Strangehold* (pg88) 'rocks' hard. Ironic.

"REAL LIFE: MENTAL"

CRIME DOES PAY: FOR 2D GAMERS

Prisoners in Oregon are being rewarded for good behaviour – by playing rubbish 2D games. Inmates with six months of clean conduct get to play 'classics' like Star Ally, Dragon Poker and Space Castle. Yes, they're not even real games, but flaky 2D tributes with '1980s style graphics'. Unbelievably, it works. Over 809 consoles have been 'sold' to inmates. To think – if they're that excited about games we regularly give less than 12% in retro reviews, how well would they behave for a go on *GTA*? No, wait...Best not to think about that, eh?



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Here's how it all works. First head to the **www.screenselect.co.uk/PSM** website, choose your free DVD to keep then complete registration. Next put together a wishlist of films you'd like to see from **every DVD available in the UK**. Once your account has been created your first title will be sent out by first class post. After you've watched it, send it back in the Freepost envelope provided and as soon as ScreenSelect receives it your next movie will be sent out automatically. When your free trial is over you can choose to become a member for as little as £9.99 a month or cancel your subscription before the end of your free trial and you won't be charged a penny!

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Pro Dojo

THE NEXT GENERATION

Each month we give you the chance to show off your gaming genius. Dojo is now simpler than ever to enter, so show us your skills.

DO THIS!

BLACK

FIRST LEVEL CHALLENGE

This month we want you to blast your way through the first level of EA's *Black* in the shortest time possible. For best results, take note of our guide from PSM2#73. Our top time was seven minutes and 31 seconds – can you do it quicker? The only rule is that you must play the level on 'medium' difficulty – we want to SEE you selecting 'Medium' on your tape OK? So lock and load your weapon (and your VCR) and send us your complete run through. IMPORTANT – Closing day is the 17th of April so we can have the winner in our next issue.

CLOSING DATE 17/04/2006

WIN THIS!

THE TOP 10 PS2 GAMES!

Complete this month's challenge and you can get your hands on ten *suuuu-poib* Electronic Arts games. That's over £300 worth of the hottest games available including *FIFA Street 2*, *Fight Night Round 3*, *Need For Speed: Most Wanted* and loads more. So slap your entry in the post as soon as possible and you can win bigstyle.

LAST MONTH'S WINNER

NEED FOR SPEED BLACK LIST CHALLENGE

Josh Holloway, Bristol

Best time: 4'02"32

Now that's fast. Josh beat blacklister Lou's time of 4'24"42 by quite a margin. How? By being a bloody good driver, that's how. His run was near-flawless and he seemed to be pre-empting each turn, indicating a terrifyingly detailed knowledge of the course. Well done, Josh. The top ten games are all yours, chief.

FILL IN THIS FORM!

WHICH CHALLENGE:
BLACK CHALLENGE

My score is.....

Name.....

Age.....

Address.....

.....

.....

I enclose...

- ☐ A tape (wound to the right place)
- ☐ A photograph (with my name on the back)

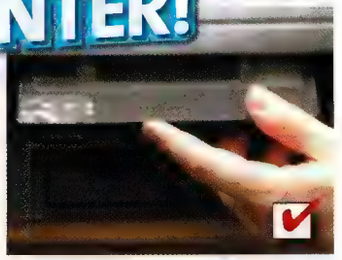
PSM2
PRO DOJO
BLACK CHALLENGE
FUTURE PUBLISHING
BATH
BA1 2BW

IT'S EASY!

Each month we dish out a challenge and you have to do it as quickly and as brilliantly as possible. The player who beats our challenge by the fattest margin before our tight closing day wins the booty. Simple. BE WARNED THOUGH, the closing date is a MASSIVELY STRICT April 17th. On that day we'll be picking our winner – make sure your tape is with us for then. We'll be announcing the results of this particular contest in our issue out on the 4th of May. And there'll be another brand new fiendish challenge for you to get stuck into, so make sure you're tuned to these pages then. Or else we'll send the boys (well, Nathan dressed in Warriors-style leather gerkin) round. Scary, non?

HOW TO ENTER!

Respond to the challenge above and send us your efforts on tape.



Plug your PS2's SCART lead into your video, tune your TV to your video and tape away.

Wind your tape to the right place and write your name on your photo.

Send us your cassette, a photo of yourself and the coupon to the right address.

Accelerator

SCANDALOUS GOSSIP, INSIDER DIRT, ZERO BULLSHIT

DOWNLOAD: Hundreds and hundreds of timeless PSone games will be available to download through Sony's online service. Now is as good a time as any to get a 4gb stick to store everything on, eh?

CONNECT: Find a wireless hotspot, fire up your EyeToy camera and chat with other PSP users across the globe in real-time with both voice and video. This is one we mocked up, but it'll look something like this.

PRICE DROP: In a few months you'll be able to buy a basic PSP bundle for a mere £140. This is good news for anyone who was previously put off by the steep price tag. There's no excuse not to get one.

WIRELESS: Don't worry if you live miles away from a wireless hotspot. In the next few years, wireless internet will become so widespread that you'll be within a hotspot anywhere.

NET ACCESS: The PSP's new net browser will be a million times better than it is. You'll now be able to watch movies, play Flash games and pretty much anything else PC/Mac browsers can do. Amazing, eh?

GPS: Attach the GPS receiver to your PSP and you'll not only have detailed maps of everywhere in the world, but some games will use the peripheral to know where you are. Weird... but interesting.

SONY ANNOUNCE THE NEXT-GENERATION PSP

Well, sort of. No new hardware, but a suite of add-ons and upgrades are on the way...

Along with the news of PlayStation 3's worldwide release, Sony have also announced a number of changes to PSP. They aren't altering the hardware, as such, rather they're releasing various peripherals and upgrading its internet support to give the console a new lease of life. First off, they're slashing the price of a basic bundle to £140. That's, like, much cheaper.

This alone is excellent news, but it only gets better. Among the new peripherals there's an EyeToy camera add-on, a GPS receiver and a browser update that lets you watch Flash movies and subscribe to RSS news feeds. Finally PSP will be a worthwhile tool for browsing the web instead of the half-finished 'prototype' it feels like now. These peripherals will initially be sold separately although the chances of a 'deluxe' bundle being released with all of these things included is very high indeed. Expect an all-in-one 'PSP2' package to be announced at the full-price recently abandoned by the bargain model.

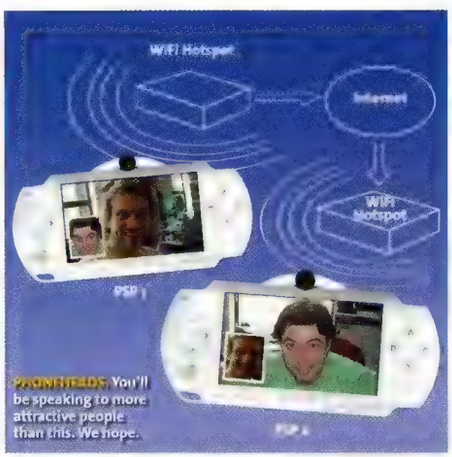
PSM RECKONS *So don't sell your PSP to your little brother just yet. In the very near future you could be using it to phone your granny, play the original* Metal Gear Solid *and find your way around town with the help of a GPS satellite. Now all PSP needs is a bit of a kick up the arse in terms of the quality of games, and all will be rosey in the Sony techno-garden.*

"GET READY FOR YOUR CLOSE UP"

WHAT WILL THE CAMERA ADD TO PSP?

Are you aware of Skype? It's basically a phone that you can plug into the internet and use to make free calls to anyone else you know with a Skype handset. Instead of using telephone wires it communicates wirelessly on the IP addresses (special internet numbers) of the people using it. Anyway, PSP will go one step further than this. You'll be able to chat with people over the internet, but you'll also be able to *see them* thanks to the camera peripheral. The camera slots into the USB slot at the top and has a microphone so you can broadcast both your face and voice. With the number of wireless hot-spots increasing rapidly, you'll be able to make IP phone calls from almost anywhere in the country.

PSM RECKONS *Using your PSP as a picture-phone to speak to your snaggle-toothed Auntie Joan in Grimsby? Yes, ple- actually, no, wait...*



PROMOTIONS: You'll be speaking to more attractive people than this. We hope.

NO GOOD GAMES ON PSP? HELP YOURSELF TO THOUSANDS SOON

PSone games available on PSP? Here are the ones we want...

Sony have announced a new download service for PSP that will let you download games from them onto your memory stick. And not just rubbish old arcade games either – they're putting their entire PSone back catalogue online. Yes, that's right – proper classic, proper games from the good old days of PlayStation. If they can get the pricing right (i.e. really cheap) then they've just solved the PSP game drought. Here are the five games we'll be downloading when the service launches in a few months time.

RESIDENT EVIL 2

1 Easily the best of the series. Until *Resi 4* anyway. Leon and Claire's harrowing trip through Raccoon City is the stuff of gaming legend. It was one of the first games to show a story from two different viewpoints and there were some really terrifying moments. Remember when you first encountered the licker? <shudder>

FINAL FANTASY VII

2 The best RPG in the world bar none. This epic adventure – and it really was epic, clocking in at well over 100 hours – featured a vast world map brimming with secrets and one of the most tragic, well-written stories in videogame history. How on Earth would we fit three CDs worth of RPG on a memory stick, though?

PARAPPA THE RAPPER

3 How perfect is this for PSP? The timeless (and bonkers) rhythm action game has some truly memorable songs including Chop Chop Master Onion's kung-fu rap. It was criticised for being too short on PSone, but on PSP and for a super cheap download price, it'd be an ideal way to kill a train ride home. Come on – give us *Parappa!*

RIDGE RACER TYPE 4

4 Even better than PSP *Ridge Racer*? This arcade racer featured over 200 cars, a lasting challenge and a brilliant story mode complete with hackneyed plot and smooth jazz soundtrack. We played this very recently and the chunky looks have aged surprisingly well. Now imagine it on PSP's sexy screen...

METAL GEAR SOLID

5 Of *course* we'd play this again. The plot is amazing (it was written before Kojima went totally mad), the graphics are excellent and it's just a very, *very* good game. Who can forget spying on soldiers' arses with the binoculars to see which one had Meryl's trademark wiggle? Or fighting bare-chested with a cyborg ninja?

More PSone games we want to see. Now. Thanks: *Jumping Flash, Die Hard Trilogy, Bishi-Bashi Special, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2, ISS Deluxe, Tekken 3, Vib Ribbon, Wip3out, Apocalypse, Grand Theft Auto 2, Twisted Metal: World Tour* and *Gran Turismo 2, Dino Crisis, Mr Domino*

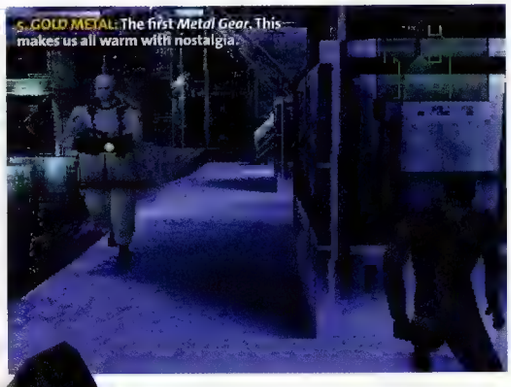
PSM RECKONS *We're not retro-heads, but come on – FFVII on PSP? How perfect would that be?*

3. TRAIN-SPOTTING: It's Parappa! How we miss him and his stupid boogie hat.

4 RIDGE URE: We like *Ridge* on PSP, don't get us wrong. But this would be better.

1. CAN'T RESI-ST IT: *Resi 2* in shiny new PSP-ovision? We'd be up for that.

2. FANTASY COME TRUE: You could play *FFVII* on the bus. How good would that be?


5. GOLD METAL: The first *Metal Gear*. This makes us all warm with nostalgia.

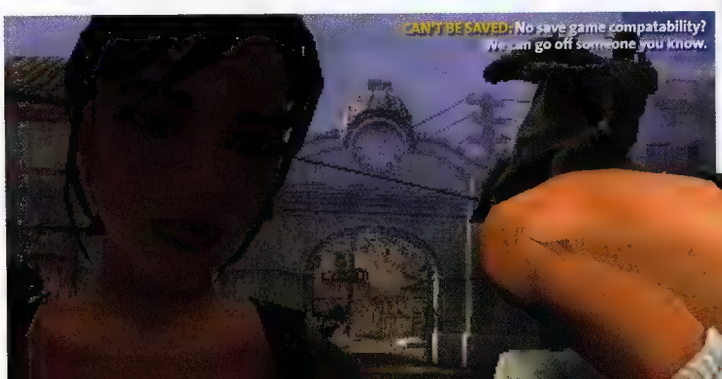
LARA SLIPS DOWN A DRESS SIZE

No more PS2 compatability – but Lara still looks great...

Just when you thought PSP had been pushed to it's technical limits by the likes of *GTA*, the First Lady of Videogames takes it even further. Yep, Lara Croft is set to make an outing in handheld land and she looks really quite stunning.

Tomb Raider: Legend is packed with all the action of the PS2 version (see the review on page 40), and it looks just as impressive. You can swing, shoot and swim – Lara even has droplets of water dripping from her body – through the story mode and there's even a collection of PSP exclusives crammed into her backpack, in the form of Wi-Fi deathmatches, no less. But the save game compatibility – which was touted to let you carry on saved points between PSP/PS2 and vice-versa – has been dropped. First game to do this gets +10%.

PSM RECKONS *Visually this is one of the strongest titles we've seen on PSP and cradling Lara between your palms feels amazing [cough]. We'll have the full review next month, so keep it PSM2.*


CAN'T BE SAVED: No save game compatability? We can go off someone you know.

"MICRO RAVE"

SMALL-TIME RACING

The only racing game where you're at risk of falling into the kitchen sink or being pecked to pieces by a giant chicken is set to zoom onto PSP. *Micro Machines V4* is about to take pole position in the race for the top-down title.

While we're content with *Mashed* on PS2 providing our sweary four-player racing thrills, a new Micro Machines – what with its lightning quick races around rooftops and its wide range of vehicles, from 4x4s to boats – is welcome. And with the promise of four-player Wi-Fi battles and the genius tracks the game is famous for, this will keep us at it for days.

PSM RECKONS *This is going to be great. Smashing your opponent with giant comedy hammers, watching their car fall apart and wheely-ing in celebration provides endless fun. We hope this turns out to be as good as ever. Lots more on* Micro Machines *next month.*

COMMUNITY CHESS: Chessboard racing should be fun. (Kasparov not pictured).

DOWN THE TUBES: *The Getaway* – now with your own personal London Underground system.

THE GETAWAY: GANGS OF LONDON

Turn-based cockney combat and randomly-generated tube maps? Get away...

Based loosely around *The Getaway*, this London crime caper features a variety of game modes designed specifically to suit the format. We were expecting another lazy third-person action/adventure but apparently you'll be able to take part in pub games (darts, pool etc.) and, bizarrely, play a Risk-style turn-based strategy game with wideboy cockney gangsters in place of warring nations...

The most interesting feature, however, is how every copy of the game will have its own unique level based on your PSP's serial number. The level is based on the London Underground, so every gamer will have a network of tunnels and stations unique to them. We're all for experimenting, but this strikes us as remarkably pointless.

PSM RECKONS *So,* Killzone *has become an isometric shoot-'em-up and now* The Getaway *is transforming into a turn-based strategy game with third-person interludes and randomly-generated tube-based levels. We will say this much – Sony certainly are being... creative. Regardless of the quality of the finished product, anything's better than another dismal PS2 port. Be happy for that.*

"DRIVE CAREFULLY IN THE RUSH HOUR"

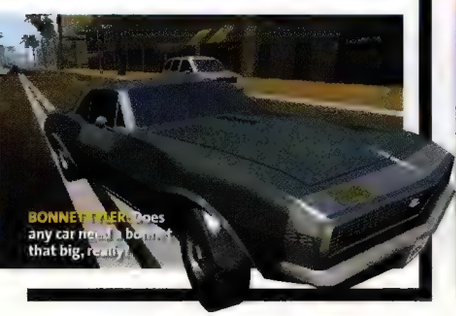
GET YOUR RUSH ON

The hand-held racing scene has a new pimped-out challenger screeching around its tracks – Midway's *Rush*. With over 50 cars to modify with the dubious help of West Coast Customs (the petrolheads from Pimp My Ride) the PSP episode of *LA Rush* looks like a decent interpretation of the entertaining PS2 racer.

This means a fully-mapped Los Angeles to explore and a story mode depicting your quest to win back your stolen rides. Thankfully it comes with new PSP-exclusive features like a Stunt Arena with ramps and loops and the customary Wi-Fi head-to-head action.

With over 36 licensed rides and the freedom to dip around LA at will, *Rush* is looking like a tempting race prospect. And it looks almost identical to the well-crafted PS2 version. It should be good.

PSM RECKONS *PS2's version was so-so, but with a stunt arena being mooted to display the game's amazing physics, we hope this will be class. More on this next month.*



BONNET TYLER: Does any car need a bonnet that big, really?

JUICED: ELIMINATOR

It's time to set the *Juiced* loose on PSP...

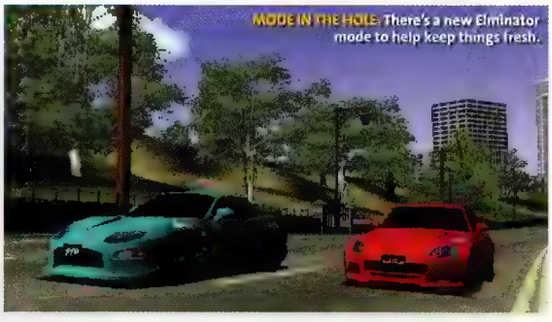
***Juiced* – one of PS2's recent wave of street racing games – is coming to PSP. And it'll be, well, pretty much the same, except with Wi-Fi multi-player and a new 'eliminator' mode where the slowest driver in each lap is kicked out of the race until the end.**

The game will share a lot of features with its big brother on PS2, but the new stuff mentioned above should keep it varied. The drift-heavy driving system and drag racing sections return and once again you'll be racing not only for first place, but for your opponent's car. So if you've bossed *NFSU* we've got your next challenge right here.

PSM RECKONS *We love the home grown, down and dirty side of* Juiced *but wanted a little more Detroit and a little less Dagenham. But the fact remains that it's yet another street racer trying to find a place on a console packed with 'em.*

THE CAN'S THE STAR: This is a car in the wheels. Mmm.

MOTHER JUICE: *Juiced* on PS2 ran into a brick wall of stiff street racing competition.



MODE IN THE HOLE: There's a new Eliminator mode to help keep things fresh.

coming soon.

your new favourite game site.

FROM THE CREATORS OF

PSM2

STAR WARS

A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away...

Lego Star Wars, the sleeper hit of last year gets the sequel we've all been waiting for... It can only be *Lego Star Wars 2: The Original Trilogy.*

Think you've finally grown up? Three words: *Lego Star Wars*. However late you're allowed to stay up, however many types of herbal tea you've got in your cupboard, however many 'proper' girlfriends you've had, it was the final proof that you're not quite ready for slippers and a mortgage yet. Apart, tiny toys and galactic space battles are excellent – together, they've got more cutesy retro appeal than an hour-long I Love Bagpuss TV special hosted by Pootle Flump and Uncle Bulgaria. The first game – based on characters we didn't really care about and films that were, honestly, a bit trump – was brilliant. The second game – based on characters we used to pretend to be and films that we've loved since we were eating Wham bars and smoking behind the bike sheds – should probably be the best thing anywhere, ever. Before we can get into all that, though, there's one thing we've got to clear up: does Greedo shoot first?

"We realise that's a concern," says Jon Smith, Star Wars producer, of the most controversial of Lucas's Special Edition rejigs – the one that undermined Han Solo's loveable rogue status by seeing him let a bounty hunter take the first shot at him at point-blank range, "And all we can say is: we'll be dealing with it in our own special way."

It's a response that illustrates one of the reasons *Lego Star Wars* was arguably the best Star Wars game ever to grace PS2 – and, a bit more contentiously, actually more watchable than Episodes 1, 2 and 3. Instead of Lucas's clunky dialogue, it had tiny Lego men acting out every scene in adorable, flawless mime, with the little plastic scamps frowning and grinning. Instead of Ewan McGregor doing a beardy impression of Alec Guinness, it had the actual, real tiny Lego Obi-Wan And, most importantly, instead of po-faced political banter and Anakin brooding a lot, it had bits where you could change the scenery around (it's made of Lego after all) or make a load of Kaminoans dance. "Lucasfilm understand that *Lego Star Wars* plays with the worlds," says Jon, when we ask if uncle George gets upset by the comedy moments. "But they appreciate that it's an authentic experience." Or, to put it another way, *Lego Star Wars* has everything that makes the original trilogy so great – the John Williams score, the memorable characters, the brilliant vehicle design – but it can go one way with more messing about. ►

"LEGO STAR WARS 2 HAS EVERYTHING THAT MAKES THE ORIGINAL FILMS GREAT"

STAR WARS

AND THE OSCAR GOES TO...

"The straighter we play it," says Jon, "The funnier it gets." He's talking, of course, about the 'acting' in *Lego Star Wars*, where little noseless figures have to convey a range of emotions that Hayden Christensen can't get right with his *entire face*. Impossible? Not at all – simply by using the universal language of Lego (X-ed eyes means you're dead and if your hat flys off you're really surprised), each scene in *Lego Star Wars* is transformed into an acting clinic worthy of Marcel Marceau. It's mostly funny – check Han's wink – but some scenes are unbearably poignant. But there's no shame in crying at the death of a small plastic toy if he's been killed by Darth Vader. Seriously. Observe the emotions of the Wars...

COCKNEY WINKER: Han gives Leia an eyeload of Corellian charm – just like in the film!

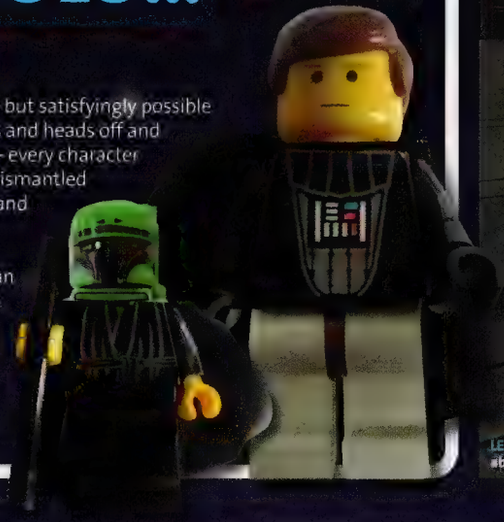
MOSTLY ARMLESS: In real life, men having limbs ripped off by Wookies look more upset.

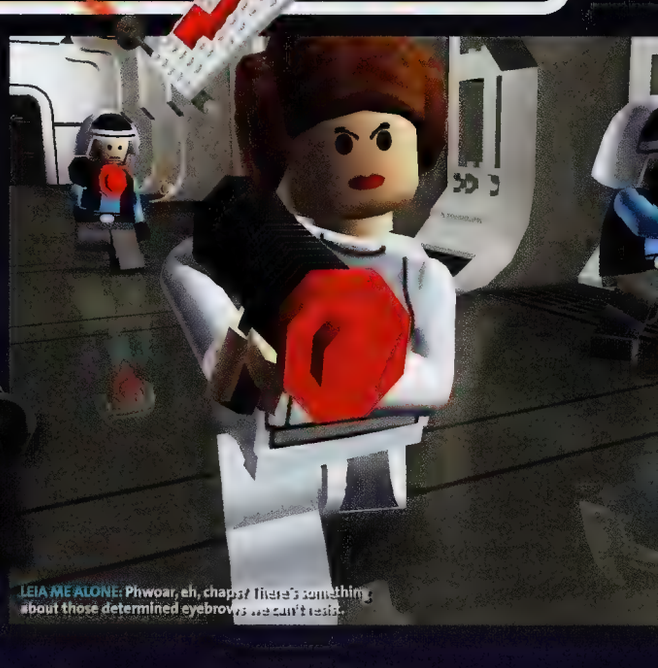
STARS IN THEIR EYE: When everyone else looks apprehensive about the Death Star suicide run, Luke goes mental. Marvellous.

STAR WARS

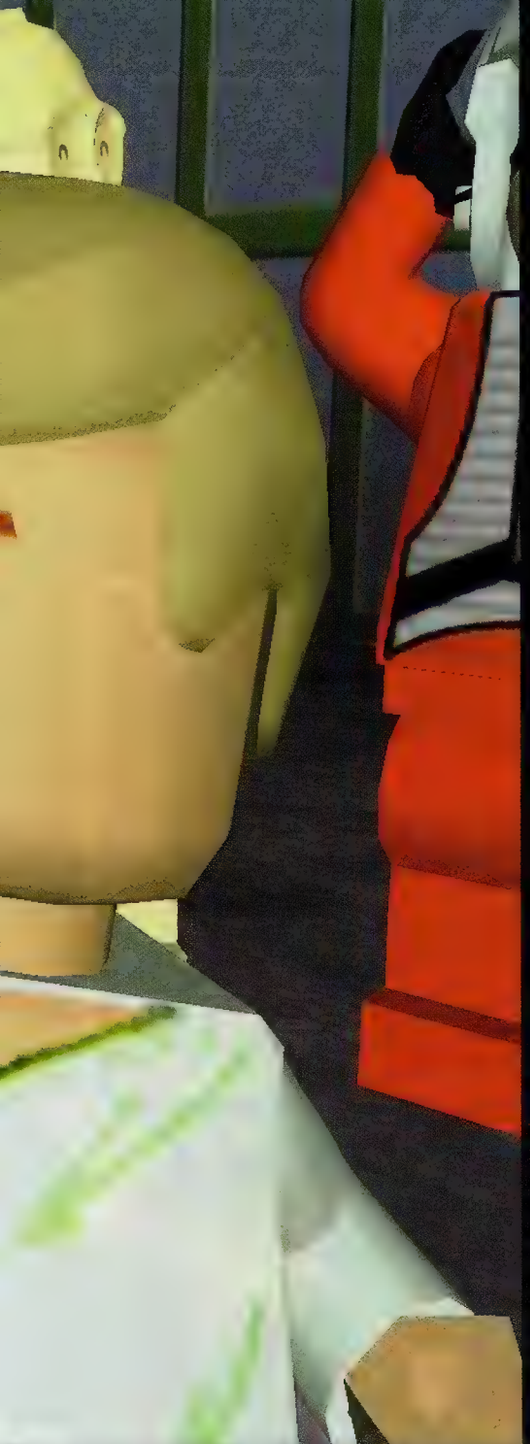
THE NAME'S SOLO... DARTH SOLO

One thing glaringly missing from the previous games – but satisfyingly possible with 'proper' Lego figures – was the chance to yank legs and heads off and swap them around. Here, though, that's been rectified – every character you've earned can be taken into customisation mode, dismantled and reassembled with different legs, arms, heads, hats and capes. Once you've created your Frankenstein-like abomination – complete with computer-generated handle like 'Boba Calrissian' or 'Princess The Hutt' you can take it into the rest of the game as a playable character. Traveller's Tales claim there are seven billion possible combinations, but you'll only actually bother making one: Slave Girl Leia's torso with a Gammoreon Guard's head. Note: if you find this in *any way arousing*, you're officially a mental.





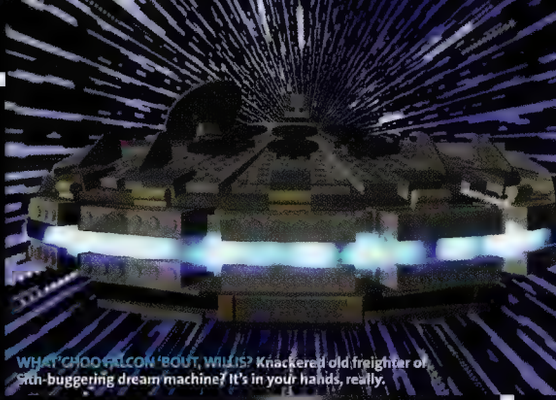
LEIA ME ALONE: Phwoar, eh, chaps? There's something about those determined eyebrows we can't resist.



STAR WARS

SHE'S FAST ENOUGH FOR YOU, OLD MAN

As before, collecting the canisters hidden throughout each level will 'build' special vehicles, giving diehard collectors an excuse to troop through each level with every character. Unlike the last game, though – which forced you to admire your plastic trophies from the safety of Dexter[illegible]r park – this time you'll be able to take them out for a spin in the levels themselves. Razzing Slave One around Hoth? Don't mind if we do...



WHAT'CHOO FALCON 'BOUT, WILLIS? Knackered old freighter or kth-buggering dream machine? It's in your hands, really.

STAR WARS

IS BIB FORTUNA IN IT?

Yes. "The most obscure character we've got's probably the Womp Rat," says head developer Loz. "The last game had 56 playable characters and this one'll have at least that many, probably more." That's virtually every character from all three films – yes, Salacious Crumb's in there – along with super-obscure alternate outfits from the films, like Chewie-carrying-C3PO's-torso. As an added bonus, using a memory card with saves from the original *Lego Star Wars* on it will make all the characters you unlocked in that available, for a grand total of more than a hundred mix-n-matchable men, women and aliens. Han Vs Maul? It's finally going to happen.

So what's changed? Well, since there are less Jedi in this version – Obi-Wan in the first film, Yoda in Empire and a fully-developed Luke Skywalker in Jedi – the blaster-carrying characters have been improved, given evade rolls and different abilities to make them more individual. Also, it's no longer just Jedi who have the ability to play with the scenery – find a pile of bricks on the ground and a prod of the controls sends Han (or whoever) into a flurry of activity, building themselves an impromptu set of stairs or a new vehicle from scratch. With enough bricks, it's possible to build entire vehicles and race them around levels, getting to previously inaccessible areas by shooting through doors with extra-powerful guns or using them as temporary platforms. Other characters have been given more animations and abilities, too – Chewie's often-talked-about ability to pull the arms off enemies finally gets some screen time, and Darth Vader's force choke would be cute if you weren't using it to murder people. Best of all is the Jedi mind trick – a non-lethal attack that makes Stormtroopers' heads twirl in confusion as they lose control of whatever vehicle they're piloting.

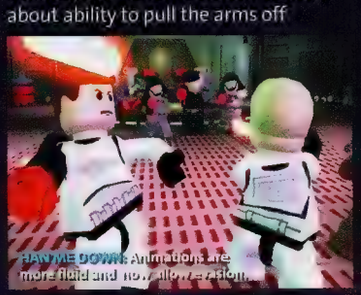
CHILD'S PLAY

Despite the amount of men with proper flats and wives and things who know what TIE Fighter stands for*, though, *Lego Star Wars* is still, fundamentally, a game for youngsters. That's partly why it's so much fun – however much you faff about and hit each other with light sabres and accidentally fall into chasms, you can't actually die – just lose the precious studs that earn you the game's more obscure bits of kit. This won't be changing for the sequel – the difficulty's still tilted firmly towards the Padawan side of things – but there will be more hidden extras to discover for devoted fans. As before, studs are the key to earning True Jedi status and hidden Lego canisters will unlock kit parts for some of the game's less well-known vehicles, but new for *Star Wars 2* are Power Bricks, impossible-to-find hidden extras with effects that the game's developers, Traveller's Tales, won't tell us about. In battle through the Death Star's corridors, for instance, being Obi-Wan Kenobi gives you the chance to take on Vader and mess about with the ship's tractor beams. This opens up new areas, and offers the chance to find Power Bricks. In other situations, characters can operate machinery, disguise themselves as Stormtroopers and even shoot security cameras to find their way into previously inaccessible areas. At the same time, this is still all firmly geared to two-player gaming – it'll feature the same drop-in-drop-out dynamic as the original, with an impressively bright computer sidekick taking over when your friend decides they're sick of being Wedge and wants to go home.

> "DARTH VADER'S FORCE CHOKE WOULD BE CUTE IF YOU WEREN'T USING IT TO MURDER PEOPLE"

Another area that's been hugely improved is the vehicular combat. In

WAN FOR THE ROAD: Obi's one of the game's few Jedi.



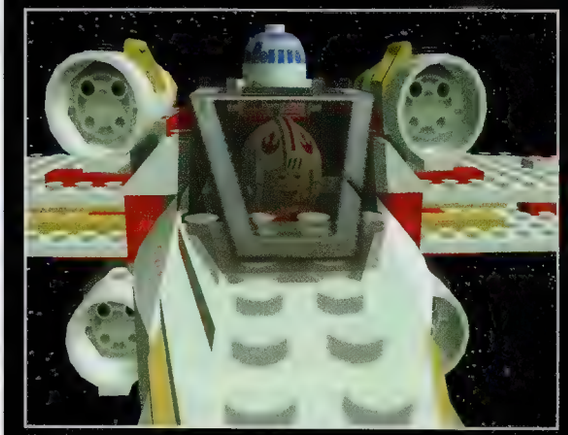
HAND ME DOWN: Animations are more fluid and now allow evasion.

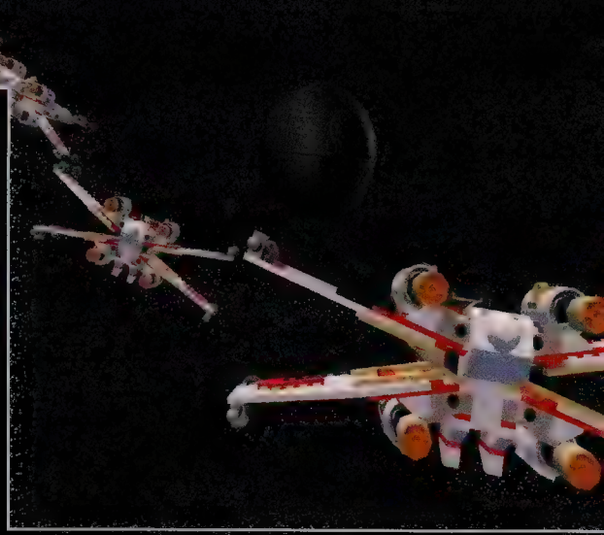
BOT TO TROT: R2-D2 can still fly in the new games – which is a bit silly.

STAR WARS

RED FIVE, STANDING BY

One area that's been massively improved is the furious action of the dogfight-style battles across Hoth and the original Death Star. As well as being able to backtrack and explore, ships now have barrel roll and loop-the-loop maneouvres. But before you ask – no, Porkins doesn't seem to be a playable character. Shame.





LIVE AND LET TIE: The studly rendition of the Empire's most popular ship is unlockable.

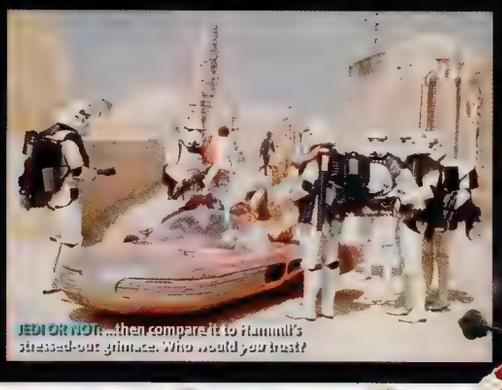
MOS DEATH: While you're on the surface, you're free to explore the Star.

STAR WARS

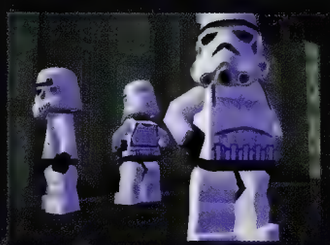
SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Can you spot which of these pics is from Star Wars the movie and which is from *Lego Star Wars II* the game? Tricky isn't it? Expect to see every classic moment from the trilogy recreated in nobbly plastic.

DROID 'N' BURIED: Check out Luke's chilled expression as he hits border trouble...



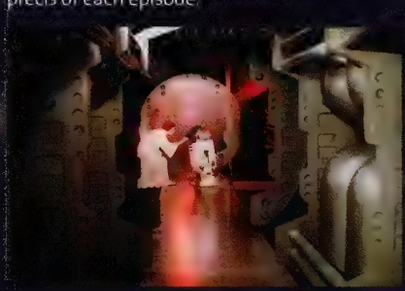
JEDI OR NOT: ...then compare it to Hamill's stressed-out grimace. Who would you trust?



STAR WARS

THE HOLY TRINITY

Got a friend, loved one or sibling who's never actually seen Star Wars? Clip them round the ear, then shove a joypad into their mitts and get them up to speed with our lightning-speed precis of each episode.



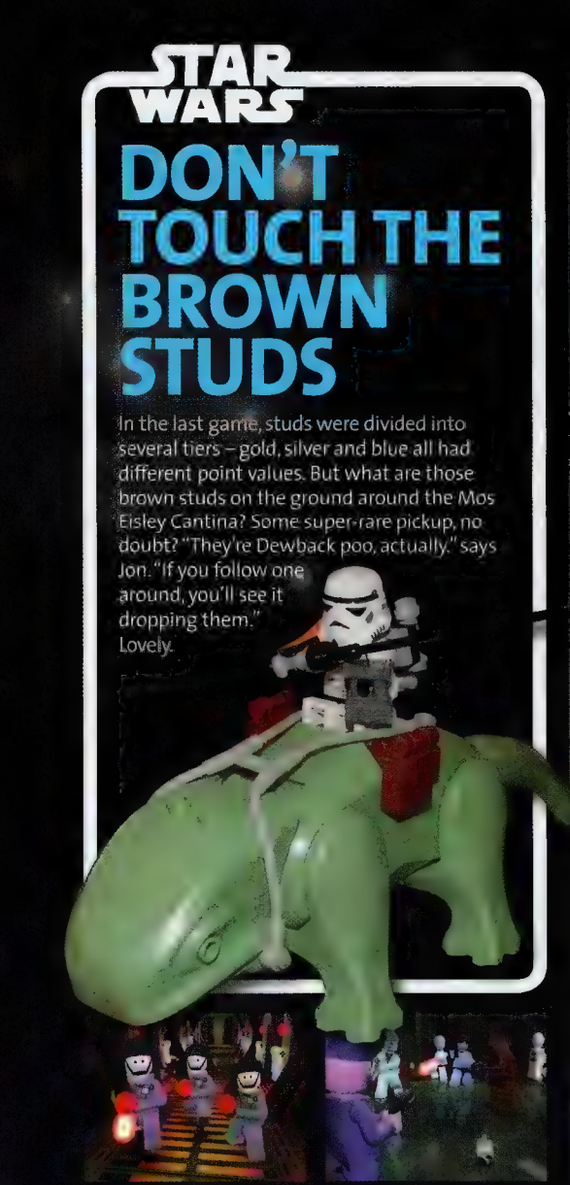
A NEW HOPE: Luke 'Farmboy' Skywalker picks up a droid that happens to have a message from an imperilled princess on it, hooks up with Corellian smuggler Han Solo and loopy vagrant Ben Kenobi, then trots off to rescue her and join the attack on the evil Empire.
In-game highlight: From what we've seen, it's got to be little Luke's reaction during the blow-up-the-exhaust port briefing in Rebel HQ. Everyone else shakes their heads sadly – Skywalker pumps his fist and snarls at the air.
What we want to see: A playable version of the trash compactor's tentacle monster.

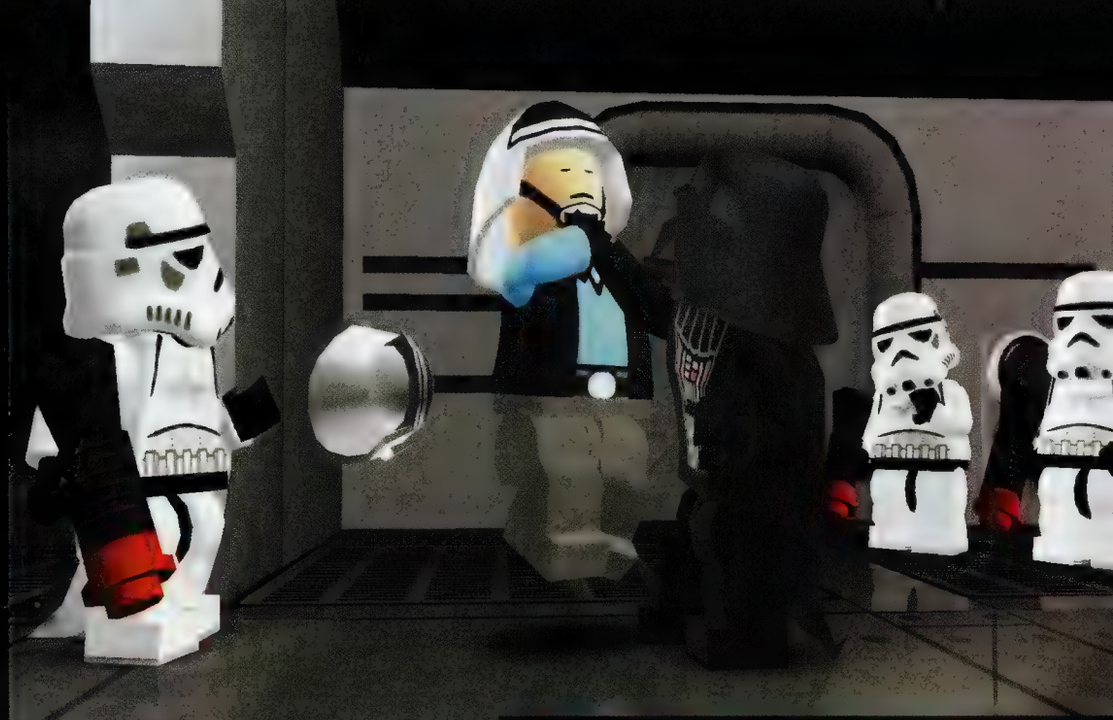
THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK: The 'dark' one of the trilogy, scripted by Indy scribe Lawrence Kasdan, sees Luke fighting AT-ATs in the snow and training with Jedi Master Yoda. Everyone heads for Bespin (cloud city), but then ends up betrayed by Han's holdmate Lando Calrissian – and Han ends up frozen in a block of carbonite while Luke gets his hand chopped off by his dad.
In-game highlight: Definitely the I-am-your-father moment – but a close second's got to be the scene where a frostbitten Luke slices open a Tauntaun's stomach to hide inside. Mmm... hot Lego guts.
What we want to see: Some sort of get-the-X-Wing-out-of-the-swamp minigame – and 'handless Luke' as a playable character.

STAR WARS

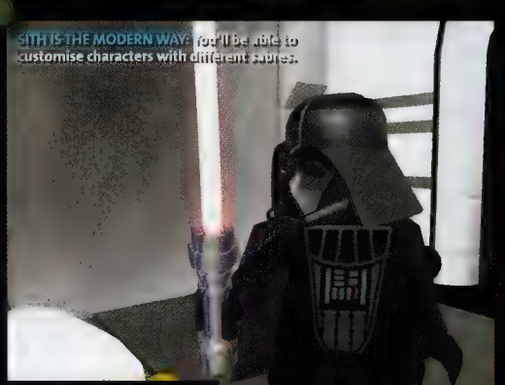
DON'T TOUCH THE BROWN STUDS

In the last game, studs were divided into several tiers – gold, silver and blue all had different point values. But what are those brown studs on the ground around the Mos Eisley Cantina? Some super-rare pickup, no doubt? "They're Dewback poo, actually," says Jon. "If you follow one around, you'll see it dropping them." Lovely.





UP THE GARDEN DARTH: In the game, Vader can force-choke enemies at a distance – or dangle them upside down.



SITH IS THE MODERN WAY: You'll be able to customise characters with different sabres.

TUSKER DO: The Tusken Raiders – still upset about being nearly wiped out by Anakin.

RETURN OF THE JEDI: Carrie Fisher fuels a generation of children getting a strange feeling in their tummies by spectacularly scuffing a rescue mission and getting dressed up in a gold bikini. Then the gang murder Jabba the Hutt and find out about the existence of a new Death Star. Yoda dies, Vader turns slightly nicer, and Lando makes up for his traitorousness by saving the day. He goes on to star in a series of commercials for Colt .45 and gets arrested for beating up his girlfriend.

In-game highlight: Sadly, you don't get to play as Jabba – and we've yet to see the Saarlac pit monster or Rancor – but the Sail Barge showdown's set to be excellent, as is, of course, the climatic showdown between Vader and the Emperor.

What we want to see: A playable version of that tentacle-headed lady who gets dropped in the Rancor.

the previous game, the Pod race and attack on Coruscant were decent but flawed, on rails and felt maybe a little too much like a departure from the rest of the game. Here, levels like the attack on the Death Star are more freeform, mirroring the style of the rest of the game and giving you the chance to pilot your X-Wing wherever you like. They'll also mimic the rest of the game's return appeal by offering the chance to have a go at missions you've already done in different vehicles. Don't fancy doing the trench run in an X-Wing? Give it a go in the Millennium Falcon. Finding the Lando Calrissian assault

LET'S TALK ABOUT: X-Barrel rolling's just the ticket for avoiding the Death Star's defences.

"LEGO STAR WARS 2'S ALREADY RESOLVED THE 'ISSUES' OF THE ORIGINAL"

on the Death Star a bit on the easy side? Try it in a TIE Bomber. Want to give yourself an extra challenge in the Speeder bike chase through Endor? Well, don't try it on anything *too* wide – you might end up horribly smeared across a tree.

It's still early days, but *Lego Star Wars 2's* already resolved most of the 'issues' we had with the original - and that's even before you factor in how much we love that squid-headed bloke from Jabba's pal[illegible]pe, don't think we'll be growing up for, ooh, at least another year or two. PSM

It's Twin Ion Engine

TRENCH WARFARE: Great shot kid – now let's clear up all these Lego bricks and go home.

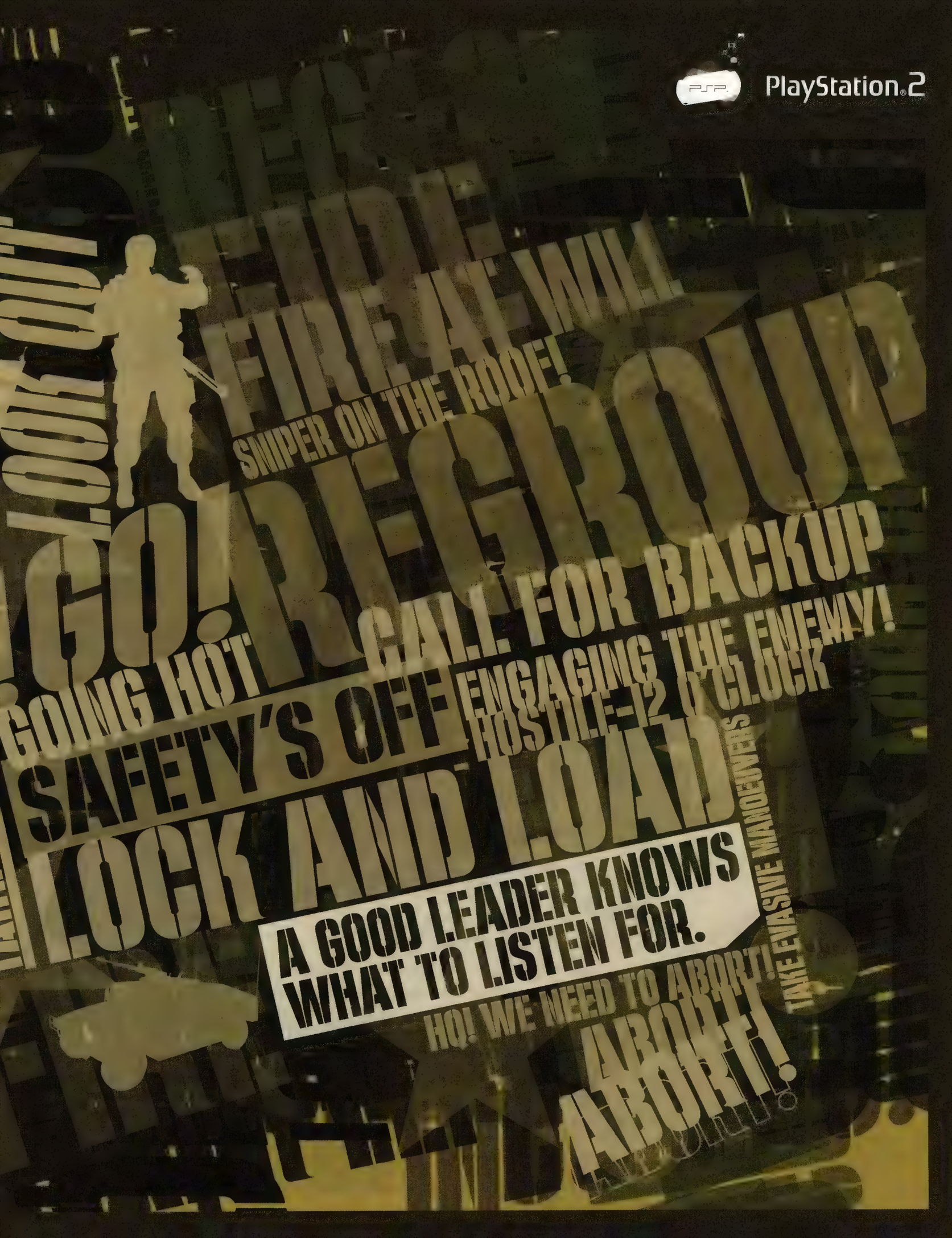
Could you make the right decision when all hell is breaking loose?

Both SOCOM 3 and SOCOM FIRETEAM BRAVO test your ability to command an elite Special Forces team in the heat of battle. Completing mission objectives in one title will assist your progress in the other via the new CROSSTALK feature, and with the latest military hardware at your disposal, including customizable weapons and assault vehicles, you'll find yourself in a firefight unlike any other.

Created in association with the U.S. Naval Special Warfare

www.socom-hq.com

LAY DOWN SUPPRESSIVE FIRE!
SWEEPING THE AREA
GRENADE!
INCOMING!
COVER ME!
ENGAGING THE ENEMY!
GO! GO! GO!
MULTIPLE HOSTILES IN PURSUIT
TAKING HEAVY FIRE!
HEAVY FIRE!
CEASE FIRE!
16+
www.pegi.info


PlayStation 2
LOOK OUT!
SNIPER ON THE ROOF!
GO! REGROUP
FIRE AT WILL
GOING HOT
CALL FOR BACKUP
SAFETY'S OFF
ENGAGING THE ENEMY!
HOSTILE-12 O'CLOCK
LOCK AND LOAD
A GOOD LEADER KNOWS
WHAT TO LISTEN FOR.
TAKE EVASIVE MANOEUVRES
HQ! WE NEED TO ABORT!
ABORT!
ABORT!

"WE DON'T REMEMBER THE BIT OF CHINESE HISTORY WITH LASER BEAMS"
DYNASTY WARRIORS 5: XTREME LEGENDS PAGE 70

Reviews

PLAYED TO DESTRUCTION BY PS2 EXPERTS

48 MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB REMIX
There's a new city and some new cars, but is that enough to get you to buy *Midnight Club 3* all over again?

52 SONIC RIDERS
Yep, no matter how we pray for another proper Sonic game, Sega insist on churning out these spin-offs. This month, Sonic goes airboarding. Don't all rush at once.

57 SINGSTAR ROCKS
The title lies – it's much more indie than rock – but that this is probably the best *Singstar* since the first. Even though KT Tunstall's on it.

You want more?!
We've got horses (*Gr Jockey 4*, 64), cartoons (*Ice Age 2*, 67), gorillas (*Rampage*, 68), er, more gorillas (*Tak 3*, 69), and historical papers (*Magna Carta*, 69)! Skilleriffic!

WELCOME

Remember, remember the, erm, somethingth of November. That's when Sony are saying PS3 will be out – a global launch, no less. There's no exact date yet, but still, terrific news all the same. Not long to wait now.

Which, in a way, is a bit of a shame for PS2, because it's only now that developers seem to be finally able to wring every last drop of power out of the machine. Witness the return of Lara this month. *Tomb Raider Legend* looks amazing, but in a few months time we'll be staring at PlayStation 3 in action and we'll probably have forgotten just how impressed we are at the moment. Then there's the lushness of *Dragon Quest* and, in recent months, the shininess of *OutRun*, the hyper-realistic *Fight Night Round 3* and the utterly jaw-dropping *Shadow Of The Colossus*. Just as we're finally seeing exactly what PS2 can do in experienced hands, it gets replaced.

Still, that's the only fly in the next-gen ointment. PS3, after seeming light years away as recently as a month ago, is now so close we can smell it. But while we wait, there are still PS2 games to love. Enjoy *Tomb Raider*. Enjoy *Guitar Hero*. Enjoy *Dragon Quest*, *Colossus*, and, when they come out, the likes of *Blood Money*, *Lego Star Wars 2* and PS2's version of *Liberty City Stories*. Anticipate the future, by all means, but keep enjoying the present.

AWARDS

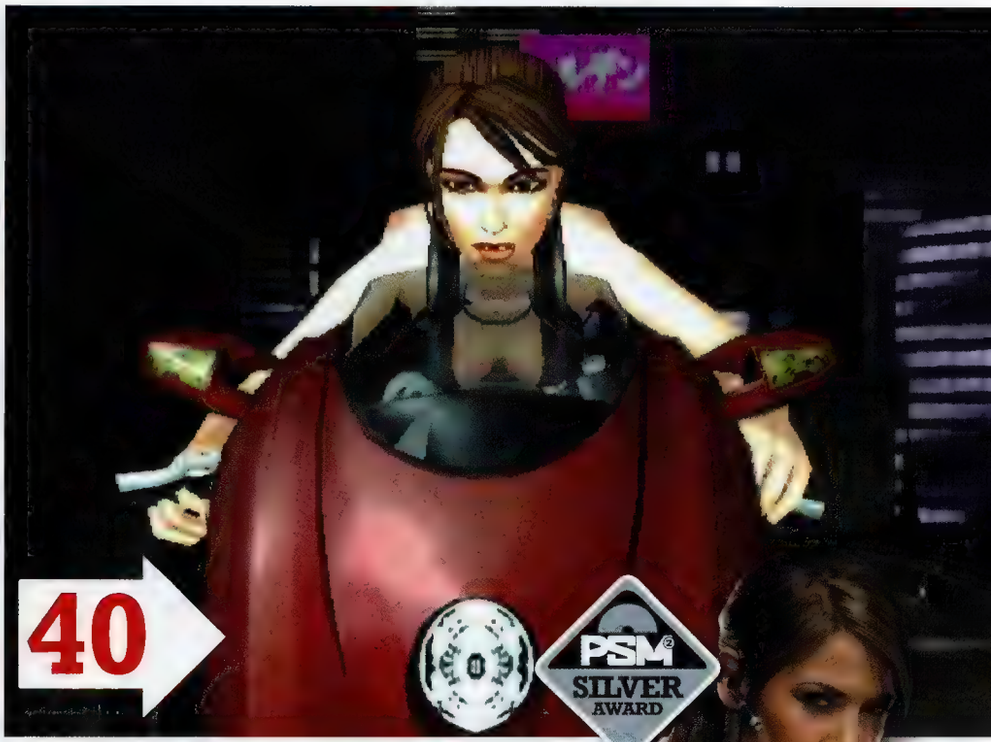
If you see one of these fellas on a review, you know your luck is most definitely 'in'...

PSM2 BRONZE AWARD
Awarded to games that score over 70. A thoroughly enjoyable, solid game and no mistake.

PSM2 SILVER AWARD
Awarded to games that score over 80. A top quality, cracking game is guaranteed.

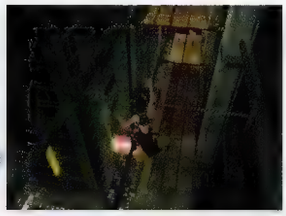
PSM2 GOLD AWARD
Awarded to games that score over 90. Reserved for true classics – don't expect to see many of these.

PSM2 GAME OF THE MONTH
The best game in the issue. If you're getting only one game this month, get this!



TOMB RAIDER LEGEND

Bigger guns. Better hair. Shorter pants. Can *Legend* restore the *Raider* name?



PSM2'S SCORING SYSTEM

PSM2 is 100% editorially independent and we mark hard, but fair. We know you want buying advice you can trust and that's why when you see a game with a good score from PSM2 on the box, you can guarantee it's going to be worth the price. Marked precisely out of 100 rather than "three stars out of five", here's what those scores mean:

0-29	Shoddy nonsense. If you see a game with a score below 30, move away from the shelf.
30-49	Maybe some fun to be had but the gameplay and design are sure to be seriously flawed.
50-69	No major faults. This is fine for die-hard fans of the genre or if you spot it going cheap.
70-84	Now we're talking. An entertaining game that only just misses out on being special.
85-89	Get your wallet out! A game in this tight scoring band will be a near-classic.
90+	Unmissable. Essential. Superb. Classic. If you're a real gamer, you will need this game.

VS

PLAYING PS2 LONGER, HARDER, FASTER

60 DRAGON QUEST: JOURNEY OF THE CURSED KING

Like dragons? Like quests? Like games that say things like 'Mercurio takes -15 hit points?' Then you, sir, are in luck...

GUITAR HERO

SOCOM 3: US NAVY SEALS

"YOU'LL END UP IN FIGHTS IN CORRIDORS SO NARROW YOU CAN ONLY SEE YOUR OWN HEAD"

FINAL FIGHT STREETWISE, PAGE 58

PRO EVO MANAGEMENT

BUZZ: THE BIG QUIZ

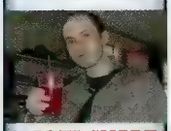
DANIEL GRIFFITHS
"If I had to choose the 'new Dan,' mused the G-man, fanning through Keeley Hawes' publicity shots, "I'd go for Pat Sharp. He's got lovely hair. And we both run a funhouse." Ho-hoo!

DANIEL DAWKINS
"I'm perfect as I am," quipped Dan, flashing the smile that's made him a household name, "So attempting to replace me would be futile. That said, I'd like a fuller beard. And bigger breasts."

NATHAN IRVINE
"What? Who?" said Nathan, winching up a sardonic eyebrow, "The new Nathan? Erm, Nathan Lane?' No, that's not quite... 'Nathan Barley? No, wait, Eddie Irvine?" Yes. Right.

ANDREW KELLY
"Rhona Cameron." said Andy, instantly. "We've got similar hair, the same cynical take on life, and he's Scottish as well." But Andy, Rhona, um... likes the ladies? "Yeah, me too. So?"

DAVID COOK
"Cyclops from the X-Men." announced Dave, "No, hang on, Jordi LaForge?" Next month: we find the superglue solvent, and Dave's mask nightmare reaches its harrowing conclusion.



JOEL SNAPE
"Angelina Jolie," trilled the freelance wastrel. "She's got the buns for it. And I've always wanted a shot at that dishy Brad Pitt." This is why we don't let Joel in the office any more.

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74 SPLINTER CELL ESSENTIALS

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THE TRUTH

Every game ever reviewed pg86

SanDisk PSM2 use only Sandisk Memory Stick Pro Duo cards in their PSPs.

U.S.Robotics PSM2 plays online wirelessly with US Robotics hardware

INFOTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: C. Dynamics
Publisher: Eidos
Players: 1
Memory Save: 216kb
Widescreen: Yes
50-60Hz: Yes
Surround Sound: Yes

PREVIOUSLY IN PSM2...
"MOVEMENT IS FLUID AND SATISFYING, WITH WELL-BALANCED, IF UNORIGINAL PUZZLES" PSM2#73

GAMEFAX
Action
Sequel
Easy
Platformer

TRIVIAURST
- 50/60Hz, Widescreen and Progressive Scan options.
- Three difficulty levels, plus Time Trial mode.
- Multiple weapons: pistols, grenades and shotgun – plus an ancient surprise.

The MON£¥ $HOT
We're not mental, *honest*, but the best bit is zooming in on Lara's big soft face and wishing you could take her away to a world of difficult puzzles where your lateral thinking is rewarded by a softly blown kiss.

TRUCKSHOT: Press ⊗ to shoot scenery – a grey laser on means you're out of range.

PSM2 SILVER AWARD

"IT'S LIKE STARING AT ONE OF THOSE DELICATE PORCELAIN DOLLS FROM THE SUNDAY SUPPLEMENTS"

TOP 5 LEGENDS

- Excalibur
- Loch Ness
- Robin Hood
- X-Men
- Of The Fall

GAMEPIE

25% Shooting
5% Driving
50% Jumping Around
15% Swearing at bosses
5% Feeling clever

PUBTALK

The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.
The best selling Lara Croft game is *Tomb Raider 2*, which shifted just under five million units worldwide – while the franchise has sold over 30 million games in all. To put things in perspective, Nintendo's Mario series has sold over 180 million units worldwide.

LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER LEGEND

A fallen angel arises, but this isn't the stuff of legend.

***Tomb Raider*'s problem isn't the number of cranks, levers and pulleys, but its lack of gears. After a promising intro, it hits cruise control and gently entertains before skidding to an early conclusion. The pace is engaging, but rarely spikes or decelerates. The puzzles are distracting, but never baffling. The locations are exotic, but rarely breathtaking. The combat is fluid, but never exhilarating. Is it worth buying? Probably – but fans should approach it with the same caution as the tombs on which the franchise built its reputation.**

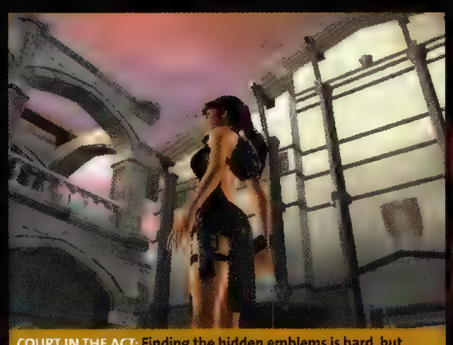
It all feels so *safe*, flattering your intelligence with pseudo-complex puzzles, rather than confronting you with abstract, more rewarding, challenges. You're always 'steered' towards an obvious solution by audio cues, Lara's line of sight or her 'puzzle solving' goggles. Unlike the classic PSone games, you rarely face multiple routes and objects don't need to be combined or ferried about. The days of entering a huge open room and staring in bewilderment are gone, as is, sadly, the flush of satisfaction when you crack an obscure puzzle, or catch a ledge after twenty minutes of jumping into oblivion. It still has the ability to get a group of people gathered around the screen, but this time they're all shouting the same answer.

Legend passes its fundamental test – restoring Lara's reputation after *Angel Of Darkness*. Like assembling pieces of an ancient artefact, Crystal Dynamics have painstakingly reconstructed a gaming icon – but it's a shame they're too afraid to push its limits until the glue has settled.

Lara is *beautiful*. A flick of the right stick and her face fills the screen. The detail is astonishing; from her milky complexion to her ruddy lips and blinking eyes. It's like staring at one of those porcelain dolls from the Sunday supplements. The model's fully 3D, wonderfully light-sourced (try flicking on her torch – ooh) and – no sniggering – divinely proportioned. You'd almost be forgiven for

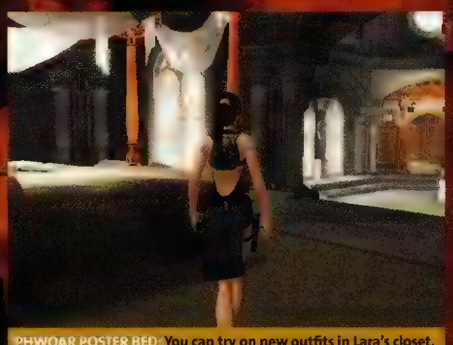
WELCOME TO CROFT MANOR

The best bit, debatably, is the Croft Manor mini-game. Lara explores her mansion looking for hidden items, which unlock rewards like outfits, cheat codes, and, er, 3D renders of barrels. She starts with no equipment, so you've got to solve basic puzzles like, say, pushing a hidden switch to open a safe and nab the grappling hook. The puzzles get increasingly obscure (with some turgid 'Ye Olde English' clues), and there's a lot of brain-scratching, oblique gymnastics and running back and forth between rooms. In other words, it's everything the main game isn't, and a welcome addition for die-hard fans.



COURT IN THE ACT: Finding the hidden emblems is hard, but reaching them is the real test of mental and physical agility.

[illegible] it's a greater test of skill than the game.



PHWOAR POSTER BED: You can try on new outfits in Lara's closet, which are unlocked by finding hidden objects.

ARE *YOU* THE WORLD'S BIGGEST LARA FAN?

WITH TERRY NIBLETT
THE WORLD'S BIGGEST LARA FAN

"Hello, I'm Terry Nibblett, the world's biggest Lara Croft fan. You might remember me from an old issue of Arcade magazine (a defunct multi-format games mag from the publishers of PSM2) in 1999. No? That's me on the right. In the hot pants. With the, er, lipstick. It's all a bit embarrassing really, but before I fold away my emerald skin-tight vest for the last time, have you got what it takes to take my crown as Lara's biggest fan?" (Note: Answers below)

ROUND ONE: THE GAMES

Can you match the screenshot to the *Tomb Raider* game it came from?

1

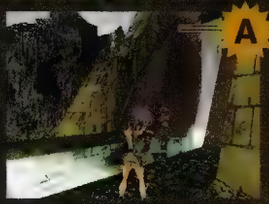
2

3

4

5

6

A 

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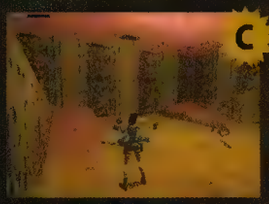
C 

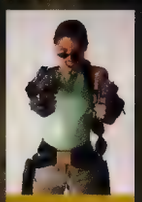
D

E

F

ROUND TWO: THE MODELS

Can you name each of these real-life Lara models?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NAME: .....

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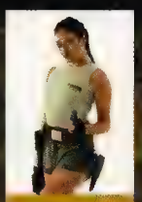
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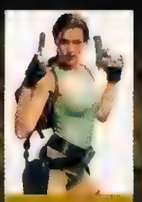
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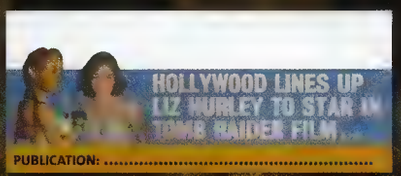
NAME: .....

ROUND THREE: THE PRESS

Can you name the following magazines/newspapers with Lara on their cover?



PUBLICATION: .....

PUBLICATION: .....

PUBLICATION: .....

PUBLICATION: .....

PUBLICATION: .....

ROUND FOUR: PROMOTIONS

Can you identify what Lara was promoting?

PROMOTION: .....

PROMOTION: .....

PROMOTION: .....

ROUND FIVE: TRIVIA

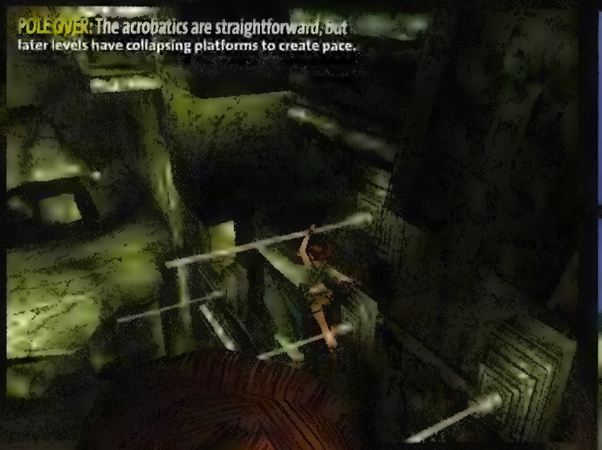
Answer the following bonus questions

1) Who played Lara's butler in the Angelina Jolie films?
2) The actor who played Lara's love interest in the first film has recently secured a huge leading role of his own – but what is it?
3) When is Lara Croft's birthday?
4) What pre-historic animal does Lara kill in the original *Tomb Raider*?
5) Who is the voice of the new Lara Croft in *Legend*?

HOW DO YOU RATE?

Here's how the PSM2 team got on.
How does your Lara knowledge measure up?

ANSWERS. ROUND ONE: 1-C, 2-E, 3-A, 4-F, 5-B, 6-D. ROUND TWO: Lara Weller, Jill de Jong, Lucy Clarkson, Nathalie Cook, Nell McAndrew, Rhona Mitra ROUND THREE: Daily Express, Entertainment Weekly, Movieline, TV Guide, The Face ROUND FOUR: Lucozade, The Tomb Raider Rollercoaster, Seat Ibiza ROUND FIVE: Chris Barrie, Daniel Craig – 007, 14th Feb 1967 (She's nearly 40!), T-rex, Keeley Hawes



POLE OVER: The acrobatics are straightforward, but later levels have collapsing platforms to create pace.

FROM REAR TO ETERNITY: The draw distance and bloom lighting are impressive – this is in-game.

touching the screen to pluck her out. You can even get her wet (by *swimming*, pervs), and watch her dry, marvelling at her lank hair, damp clothes and – the power of Christ compels us – glistening chest.

GOT THE MOVES

A gentle nudge of the stick and Lara strolls nonchalantly. A push, and she bursts into a dynamic sprint. She leaps (press ⊗), rolls (◎), pushes objects (△), swings on ropes, shimmies along ledges, swims and climbs poles – the flexibility is incredible. It's clever, too. You can accelerate movements by tapping △, in order to quickly shimmy along ledges or ascend ropes. The exacting 'grid' system of the PSone games is gone, but so is the maddening analogue imprecision of *Angel Of Darkness* – a relief for anyone who's spent ten minutes trying to align themselves with a ladder in her wretched PS2 debut. If you think you can make a jump, you can – and there's no need to rely on fiddly shadows.

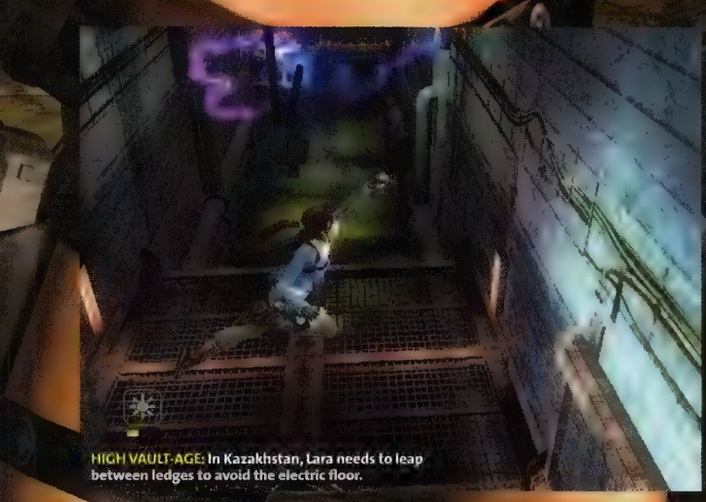
At it's pomp, it's slicker than *Prince Of Persia*, if slightly less clever or demanding. In Tokyo, for example, Lara climbs a ladder, leaps sideways to a platform, uses her grapple (press ◎) to unhinge a platform, leaps across effortlessly and launches into another jump – landing on a pole and swinging 360° to safety. The environments have been carefully constructed to maximise Lara's acrobatic fluidity, even if there are rare occasions when the camera flips and you have to push counter-intuitively in another direction to, say, set a rope swinging. Our only complaint is that the object placement is sometimes too slick – the game railroads you in the right direction to maintain the flow. It's initially flattering, but some sections would certainly have benefited from the 'where on Earth do I go *next*?' platform/ledge placement of old.

Combat is functional. You can leap and roll while shooting and perform 'special' moves – you can slide into foes (◎), or double tap ⊗ near an enemy to leap off their face and recoil in <pfft> Matrix-style slo-mo while targeting in mid-air. It's satisfying, but it wears thin. Problem is, the pistols aren't much worse than the M16 or shotgun, and the game rarely *demands* a variety of attacks. Health packs are so plentiful, enemies so weak and dumb, you can muddle through by running around and locking on. It would've been better if certain foes were invulnerable to standard attacks or more emphasis was placed on using cover. 90% of your foes are foot soldiers or – yes – tigers.

LARA: BIKE TO HER BEST?

Sadly, the driving sections are a bit pump. You're funnelled down an invisible corridor, and can usually proceed by holding down L1 (lock on), R1 (shoot) and ⊗ (accelerate) while occasionally waking up to steer a bit. It's not that the these bits are *bad*, but there's little feeling of danger, the bike physics are non-existent and, at times, it looks like the drab scenery is looping around. The closest comparison is the driving sections from EA's recent Bond games like *Everything Or Nothing*.

A BIKER CALLED LARA: Shooting people is easy and the bike never feels in contact with the track – the jumps are nice, mind.



HIGH VAULT-AGE: In Kazakhstan, Lara needs to leap between ledges to avoid the electric floor.

"YOU'D BE FORGIVEN FOR TOUCHING THE SCREEN TO TRY TO PLUCK LARA OUT"

TERRY NIBBLETT'S TOMB RAIDER LEGEND DIARY

"Hello, Terry here. As a veteran of the series, PSM2 have asked me to play through the new game, take a few screenshots and record my observations to see how things have changed. I think you'll be pleasantly surprised!"

"Footballs, eh? Phew. Did somebody turn up the central heating? Hmm. I wouldn't mind pumping up those footba... Not that they need... Cough. Soz."

"When Lara goes swimming, her clothes get – ooh! – soggy and you can see her... blimey... face glisten with moisture, just like her giant footbal... er, sorry. You lost me there. What? Eh?"

"Just got to the bit where Lara... <why am I finding it hard to type?>... *rips off her dress* like Angelina Jolie in Mr and Mrs Smith. And *what a rip-off*! Geddit? Phwoaarrrghah!"

"Lara has a variety of outfits, including this... mmm... biker costume. It's made of leather and probably squeaks and... oh, God... sorry. What? Oh, Lara, not now. You cheeky minx"

"Blimey. I played a few hours without realising you can manipulate the camera, and... oh, I say... phew... Hello... what's this? SWEET MERCIFUL LORD! That's, er, weird."

"Last chance, Terry, cough it up. <NEVER!> Oh, yeah... what if I... <OH MY WORD!>... where is the key... oh, *Terry*! <I'll... OOOH... NEVER TELL YOU! NEVER!>. I love you Terry. I always have."

Boss battles do require fresh tactics – but it's the only area where *Legend* feels 'wrong'. The first few battles are simple dodge/shoot affairs with basic environmental interaction – painless, if unspectacular. A few of the latter battles are infuriating since they introduce unique controls that lack the polish of the main game. For example, in one bit you need to blast a <spoiler alert> gas beast with a magnetic gun into an electric field. Aiming is clumsy, the foe attacks unpredictably and when you work out what you need to do, your grappling hook doesn't lock on quick enough <spoiler ends>.

Conversely, puzzles play it safe. Apart from an initially devious physics-based ball/see-saw puzzle and an agility/light beam manipulation section – both of which are in the opening level – we can barely remember a puzzle in the entire game. You will get stuck, but only for minutes, and all the puzzles are ends to themselves – instantly bypassed and forgotten. It *might* be a blessing, but you no longer need to traverse between dizzying rooms blindly pulling levers or scrambling around looking for sections of a key. Even *God Of War* – the ultimate balance between accessibility and hardcore appeal – threw in a few puzzles that left you scratching your head.

LOOKS FAMILIAR

There are highlights: a Tokyo nightclub shootout with Lara diving around in a ripped dress like Angelina Jolie from Mr and Mrs Smith, a deliberately staged swan dive from a towering cliff (shameless nostalgia) and... er, a haunted house-style King Arthur museum (not unlike a key scene from *Silent Hill 3*). That's the problem – even the good bits have been seen before. They work. They're fun. But they're not original. The opening level opens on a cliff face, like Mission Impossible II, while one boss is on shore leave from Lost.

At the risk of waxing lyrical, it feels like another example of game design by focus group – the spikey/annoying/memorable bits have been ironed out with and along with 'eccentricity' (the

"IF YOU REPLACED LARA WITH THE PRINCE OF PERSIA, THIS'D BE HIS WEAKEST GAME YET"

BOSS BATTLES: NOT VERY GOOD

40 minutes into every level, you reach a giant empty room and your heart sinks – it's boss time. A bit like the bike sections, they're not usually that hard (save the chuffing magnetic gun battle), but they're not that fun either. You hop about dodging bullets while holding down shoot. There's the odd bit of environmental interaction, but it's usually far too well sign-posted. Like the game as a whole, they're just not that challenging or memorable – unlike the bosses in *MGS3* or *God Of War*.

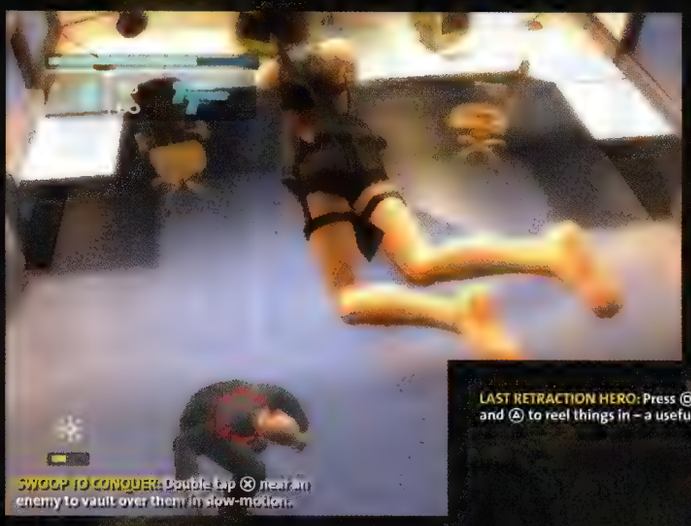
[illegible]: This is your arch nemesis Amanda, whose power comes from that spooky demon necklace.

[illegible]: The Tokyo boss is easy – just keep jumping.

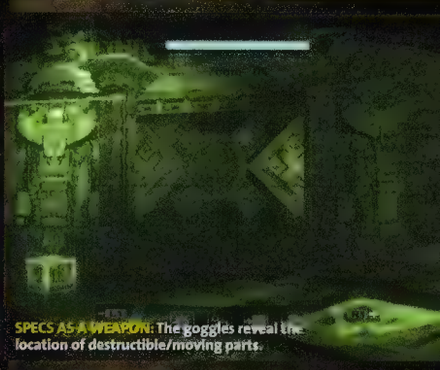
[illegible]: with a simple shoot/grapple combo.

[illegible]: Use the magnetic gun to trap the demon, then... well, that'd be telling, but you'll curse the controls.

ALL FORK AND NO PLAY: Complex, state-shifting puzzles? Nah – it's more like a running device.



SWOOP TO CONQUER: Double tap ⊗ near an enemy to vault over them in slow-motion.



SPECS AS A WEAPON: The goggles reveal the location of destructible/moving parts.

LAST RETRACTION HERO: Press ⓞ to grapple, and Ⓐ to reel things in – a useful tool.

hallmark of the *MGS* series) deleted at planning stage to avoid alienating the 'target market'. The unchallenging puzzles are a symptom of a world that boos when Simon Cowell suggests a poor singer was, well, *ordinary*. In this push-button, ring-tone, hyper-capitalist world, what people want, they get – and like many game developers, Crystal Dynamics seem scared to buck the trend.

Don't get us wrong. *Tomb Raider: Legend* is entertaining, but it fails as a truly memorable experience – something you couldn't say about its predecessors. They may have made you sweat, swear and waste hours jumping into pits, but they left you glowing with satisfaction. They were flawed, maddening epics bordering on a cultural event – *Legend* is merely polished Hollywood fodder. In essence, it's closer to an EA James Bond game, than a traditional adventure – and everything, good or bad, that suggests.

Truth is, if you replaced Lara Croft with, say, the *Prince Of Persia*, this'd probably be his weakest game yet. Lara may have been broken, but she's now the glue that holds this game together. You'll forgive its unchallenging slickness, and lack of memorable set pieces every time the sun flushes over Lara's delicately-lit face. The music is beautiful. The environments are large, vivid and distinctive. But Lara is magnetic – after *Angel Of Darkness* devilled her mobility, she now flows with heavenly grace.

Lara, the legend, is reborn, but *Tomb Raider*, the infuriating, epic puzzle game we loved, is dead. Hopefully, Lara's next adventure will take a step further – it isn't just about learning from the mistakes of the past, but preserving its majesty. We applaud the massive improvement over *Angel Of Darkness*, but wish this series' defiant, puzzle-based heritage, hadn't been so completely engulfed by the emphasis on showmanship and easy progress. **Daniel Dawkins**

The legend continues on April 7th

X FACTOR: There are real-time, push button, cut scenes like *Resi 4*, but they're very easy.

PSM² VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Fluid, responsive and effortlessly playable. – Not challenging enough, needs more variety.	+ Lush animation, lighting and draw distances. – Needs more scripted 'wow' moments.	+ Perfectly matched orchestral strains. – Supporting cast's soundbites grate.

LIFESPAN

A pleasure to explore, no obscure bits. Nine relatively unchallenging hours, but we finished our second play through in less than five.

MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
ANGEL OF DARKNESS

IT'S WORSE THAN...
GOD OF WAR

Lara's reinvention outshines a game that's too slick for its own good – with better boss battles, more epic environments and taxing puzzles, it'd be a classic.

81

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Konami
Publisher: Konami
Players: 1–2
Memory Save: 1791KB
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: No

QUESTION...
The producer of *PES Management* is named after which animal?

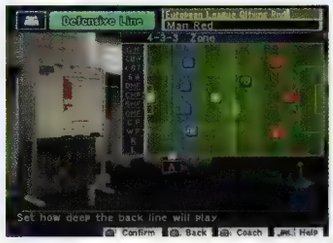
PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.
"Konami's first football game was *Konami Hyper Soccer*, which appeared on the NES in 1981 – that's 25 years ago."

GAMEFAX
Management / Sports / Realistic / Sequel

TRIVBURST
- Uses the classic *Pro Evo* game engine to show matches in real-time.
- Scout Europe to find top players for your side.
- Link up with *Pro Evo 5* and play as your created team.

0 – 0
1st 03 : 47
The MON£Y $HOT
The Match Mode allows you and a mate to test your tactical know-how in a one off game. It's a real test of nerves – just remember not to think out loud, OK?

"DIGGING IT IN THE DUG OUT"



RON-GLISH

What won't help newcomers to the *PES* series is that they'll be getting *PES*'s quirky view of football that's put across in a unique language that only exists in-game. In *PES*-world, players are described as 'Cross Passers', 'Centre Back Stoppers', 'Side Backs', 'Instigators' and as being 'Core'. Then there's tactical options such as Passive Through Ball and Breakthrough Dribbling – while its not complete gibberish, its not the appropriate lexicon of those who grew up listening to Ron Atkinson either. Although you'll get used to it, it only serves to remind you that you're playing a game and that you're not really managing Portsmouth to unparalleled heights.

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S NOT CLUTTERED: The option screens are packed with info and could be daunting for *Pro Evo* newcomers.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER MANAGEMENT

Fancy playing *PES*, but with a really in-depth management mode? Tough. Fancy just watching matches, but with a slightly half-arsed management mode instead?

It seems far harder to create a successful football action game than management sim. This is mainly because the latter can conceal any flaws behind data, options screens and the hands-off nature of the gameplay. Action games live and die by their feel and flow, which has to be just right. *PES* has got that. Seabass and his team have manage to bottle football and sell it back to us – that's why they've won and why they're the kings of world and can look down on everyone from their magical football office in the sky. But when you consider this lineage, *PES Management* can only be viewed as a bit of a disappointment.

It's accessible enough, for sure. From the start, you're offered face-to-face chats with players, coaches and managerial assistants and if you need advice on coaching, scouting reports or budget assessments, then *PES Management* gives you one-on-one meetings with an almost RPG-like presentation. Then if you want to pep up a certain member of the squad, you can choose to look at say, Wayne Rooney's freckled death-mask and try to make him smile. Unsettling, but often amusing.

Beyond the meeting, what you're presented with is a pumped up version of the Master League that allows you to control tactics and recruitment of personnel. It's much like any other console management game, but it uses the *PES* brain and game engine. This, of course, should be its greatest strength and, initially, it is. It's not often in management games that you're prepared to watch a match in real time, but the *PES* match engine is so engaging, you'll find yourself swept up in events, holding your breath every time you bear down on goal. The other advantage is that old *PES* hands will be able to navigate the menu screens easily and have an immediate understanding about how they want their team to play.

SIMPLY THE REST: Just like in *PES*'s Master League you always have to be aware of player fatigue.

WE CAN'T MANAGE

The problem is that this strength is also it's biggest drawback. In any management game, you have to deal with a certain sensation of helplessness – there's only so much you can do once your men are on the pitch. The thing is that this frustration is magnified in *PES Management*, as you can see the problems preventing your team scoring and know that if you had a joypad that controlled more than substitutions, you'd be able to put things right. Instead you have to hope that an Al van Nistelrooy will make the right decisions with only the suggestions you can make

TOP FIVE MANAGERS

- Bill Shankly
- Alex Ferguson
- Brian Clough
- Rafael Benitez
- Our bank manager. Hi!

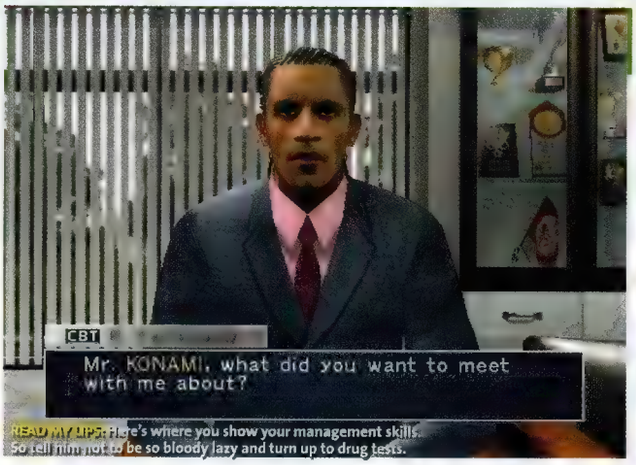
GAMEPIE

15% Scouting
10% Taking training
5% Having player meetings
35% Tweaking tactics
35% Watching match day action

ANSWER

Well it ain't Seabass, as this game is *Greyhound's* baby. He's called Greyhound as he has a lovely nature but needs a lot of exercise. Maybe.

TACTIC TOE: This view gives you an idea of where space can be found in the opposition's formation.



READ MY LIPS: Here's where you show your management skills. So tell him not to be so bloody lazy and turn up to drug tests.

in the Individual Strategy menu. You see, your best laid plans seem to have little effect on the match. This doesn't really concern keeping the ball out of your net because your back line works best as a unit and so can easily be organised with the general defensive settings – it's at the other end of the pitch where it becomes frustrating.

You can assign certain players as Instigators that initiate certain interactions – lay-offs, crosses and so on. For instance, when your attacking midfielder has the ball, he can look for a through pass to the lead striker. The problem with this is that then this pass selection becomes a *priority* rather than an option, so you're left pulling your hair out as your playmaker ignores the beautiful run by the winger in acres of space on the flank and instead attempts to weave an over-ambitious pass through the legs of a cluster of centre backs.

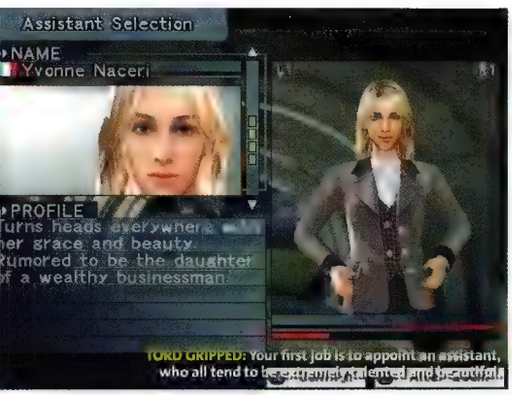
There seems to be some conflict between what you can prescribe to individuals and the AI decisions that they make. It's one thing to have a gameplan, but you have to rely on the players to take sensible options based on the way the match opens up and that doesn't happen often enough.

The other big problem is that *PES* as a series is notorious for lacking data accuracy. After all, this is a game that once had Kenny Miller in the Liverpool squad and still classes Alan Smith as a talented centre forward. While it has vastly improved since its 'Owenn' and 'Arse' days, there's still a substantial distance between *PES* and reality. This can be seen most obviously in the fact that the game doesn't even include the moves that occurred in January. And like in *PES*, you don't get the option to pick a lower league team, so forget any dreams you might have of managing Lincoln City to the Premiership title.

The majesty of the in-game action in the 'proper' *PES* games enables us to forgive a multitude of omissions and weirdness. In *PES Management*, they're just pure frustrations. And there's one final problem for the game – all its frustrations suddenly dissolve away when you hit the eject button and slide your well-worn copy of *PES5* back into your PS2 instead. **Dave Harrison**

■ PES Management *is out now.*

"WHEN YOU CONSIDER ITS LINEAGE, PRO EVO MANAGEMENT CAN ONLY BE CONSIDERED A DISAPPOINTMENT"



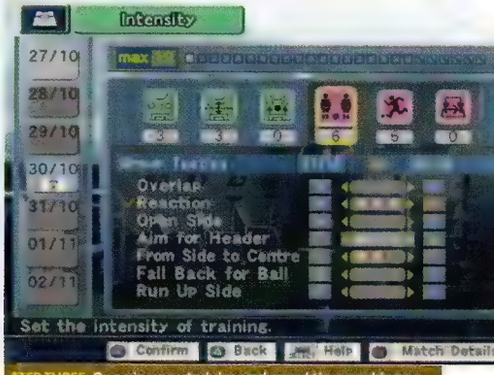
TORD GRIPPED: Your first job is to appoint an assistant, who all tend to be attractive, talented and beautiful.

A WEEK IN FOOTBALL

When you're managing a *PES* team, you'll slip quickly into a regular routine. Seven days before the next match you'll get the Opponent Data from your Coach. It's now you can decide on tactics, then spend the week preparing for the game on the training field. It's a sensible approach but if you just take the advice of the Coach (wise, as his thinking comes from the *PES* brain that will run the game) all you'll end up doing is tweaking the general tactical settings. The only good thing is you can change your backroom staff any time. Perfect if you want to surround yourself with Phil Neal style 'yes' men.

STEP ONE: Get opposition data from your coach.

STEP TWO: Take his advice on how to approach the game.



STEP THREE: Organise your training and spend time working on your defensive line and attacking plans.

STEP FOUR: Pick the best eleven men for the job.

STEP FIVE: Lose the game thanks to a keeping howler.

STEP SIX: Cry, blame everyone but yourself, then sack your coach for giving you crap advice and hire a more expensive one.

PSM VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ It's clear which areas your team is failing in. – But it's very hard to correct these failings.	+ The *PES* game engine is engaging. – The menu screens are a bit too busy,	+ Peter Brackley's still on the mic. – Peter Brackley's *still* on the mic.

LIFESPAN

A game that potentially could keep on giving, with youth players to promote and classic players to unlock.

MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
PREMIER MANAGER 2004

IT'S WORSE THAN...
LMA MANAGER

A weird mix of the overly familiar and unsettlingly new. An interesting idea but, despite the 25 quid price tag, this is one *PES* we can't fully recommend.

65

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Rockstar
Publisher: Rockstar
Players: 1 – 2 (1 – 16 online)
Memory Save: 400Kb
Widescreen: Yes
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: Yes

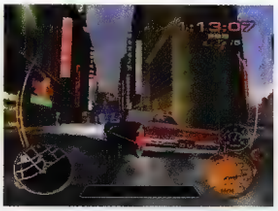
PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.
"The name Lambourghini Murciélago means 'bat' in Spanish, confusingly."

GAMEPIE
79% Driving really fast
1% Losing your concentration for a split second...
20% ... and backtracking for miles.

GAMEFAX
Driving
Budget
Hard
Network Play

TRIVBURST
- 24 new cars.
- 100+ licensed tunes.
- Decals, license plates, paint jobs and neons to fiddle with.

The MON£¥ $HOT
There's nothing like slapping too much power in your ungainly ride – then missing a corner, crashing like a berk and losing by miles. Ah.
PSM2 SILVER AWARD
CLASSIC
M/H



THE CARS ARE THE STARS

Car fetishists will ruin their beaded upholstery over *Club*'s additions, whacking an impressive 24 vehicles into an already strong garage. Top of the line is the '70 El Dorado, closely followed by the likes of the Yuhon Denali and '98 Diabolo. On the bike side, there's the usual array of choppers, with the Velux topping up the list. There are even a couple of Ferraris, though they're listed as F355s, for some reason. Curious.

"SHINY NEW CARS – **BETTER GAME?"**

MIDNIGHT CLUB 3 DUB EDITION REMIX

How about *Midday Club* instead? Just for a change?

For the past few years, *Need For Speed* and *Midnight Club* have been going head to head in the custom-racing streets, each nudging ahead with various pimpings, buffings and polishings. The current state of play sees *Need For Speed* nosing into the lead thanks to the masterful inclusion of psychotic cops – but can this revamp of the last *Club* take the lead? Well, no – but that doesn't mean it isn't worthy of a long, hard look.

To be clear – this isn't a new *Club*. It's a budget edition of the original with extra tunes, cars and challenges, many of which take place in new city, Tokyo. The driving's basically the same. It's also worth pointing out that Tokyo originally appeared in *Midnight Club 2*, and doesn't seem to have changed much – it's still a neon riot and it's still laid out like it was designed by a man who really, really likes handbrake turns. With stacks of tight, acute angles into narrow alleys, it's best suited to advanced racers, and pulling it off a sharp turn on a bike without clattering into several lamp posts is an achievement. Doing it with the new cars – which include a beautiful '70s El Dorado – borders on the impossible, since when they're tricked up to the nines you'll barely be able to register the route arrows before you're careening down the wrong street. At the upper echelons – and especially in the unforgiving territory of online play – it's like an extended memory test, relying less on reactions and more on how well you can remember the bits of course that aren't on the map.

REMIX OF THE BEST?

Is it really worth investing in this re-buffing if you've already got the original? Well, the good news is that you won't have to slog through the early races again – a 100% complete save from *Dub Edition* translates into a 77% in *Remix*, slinging you into the fray with a bootful of cash ready to spank the new cars. If you're excited about shiny rims, though, forget it – the customisation mode won't be seeing any new content. The addition of a new city's excellent, certainly, but perhaps not as compelling as, say, a completely redone environment – and the online mode isn't any more fun than the blink-and-you're-last races of the last game. *Club*'s still excellent but even a load of new cars and paint can't disguise the fact that there's a year-old engine under the bonnet. **Joel Snape**

■ Dub Edition Remix is out now.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Fast, flash and full of optional extras. – How much do you enjoy memorising courses?.	+ Shiny like a Vaseline-smothered baby. – Not quite as polished or perfect as *Burnout*.	+ More than 100 tracks. – Not the throatiest engine noises you've ever heard..

A whole lot of stuff to unlock if you've never played it before, but just one sort-of-new city if you have.

MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
FORD STREET RACING
IT'S WORSE THAN...
BURNOUT REVENGE

Still lagging behind *Need For Speed* for modding and a fair stretch behind *Burnout* for sheer speed and crashiness, but for 20 quid you can't really go wrong.

80

THE HOTTEST NEWS ON THE PLANET...

COMPUTER AND VIDEO GAMES .COM

CVG

FROM EUROPE'S NO.1 GAMING WEBSITE

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Red Octane
Publisher: Gem
Players: 1-2
Memory Save: 143kb
Surround Sound: Yes
50-60Hz: Yes
Widescreen: No

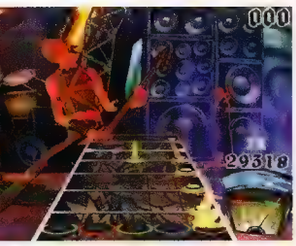
QUESTION...
What's the longest ever guitar solo to have featured in a top ten single?

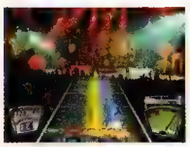
DOT.NET
www.guitarherogame.com details the sort of maniacal devotion people are lavishing on their guitars, as well as details of guitar parties and videos of people doing improbably well on Bark.

GAMEFAX
Music
Old-school
Hard
Original

TRIVBURST
- Licensed tracks includes tunes from Ozzy Osbourne, Helmet, Hendrix and Queens Of The Stone Age.
- 18 unlicensed tracks from competition winners.

The MON£¥ $HOT
Get Star Power going, and the on-screen 'hero' twirls his guitar round *SSX Tricky*-style. But how's he actually playing it when he does that?





"I'M GONNA BE IN A BAND WHEN I GET TO HEAVEN"

GUITAR HERO

This is finally out in the UK – so it's time to grab your geetars and strike a pose once again...

Somehow, it just feels right. To the outside world, sure, you're a man standing in the window of his flat, clutching a Fisher Price guitar and – because it's the weekend and there's nobody else in, OK? – wearing nothing but your favourite bed-shorts. In your head, though, you're a star. You're wailing on your cherry red Gibson, taking a soulful drag on a cancer stick and razzing out a solo that'll have the groupies queuing around the block. You're Alex *Amplitude* and *Frequency* – it uses the same scrolling-bar format, the same symbols, and it's just as freakishly difficult. The only difference is that now it comes with a guitar. Beating Konami's *Guitar Freaks* peripheral by a full two buttons (for a total of five, though you only use the last one in Hard and Expert modes), the guitar's a chunky plastic marvel. The strum bar can be flicked up or down – or alternated on fast solos – and has a pleasing, proper-guitar action. There's a whammy bar for bending long notes. Crucially, there's also a 'tilt' function – with enough star power built up by nailing tricky riffs, lofting the neck to vertical doubles your points for each note. Testing among team PSM2 suggests that it's all a lot easier if you can already play a proper guitar, but getting to grips with the basics is easy enough for

GOLDEN AXE?

The default guitar's a sturdy beast – solid of build and responsive of button – but the fact remains that it looks, well, a little bit kiddy. No surprise, then, that our yankee cousins have already been hard at work modding their axes in a rock stylee. Even a paint job's a stern task – doing it without getting paint all over the buttons requires disassembling the guitar – but some mentalists have gone a step further and customised their guitar's performance. One chap suggests taping little squares of cord under the fret buttons to make it more responsive, and another loon's actually made his wireless by soldering on bits from a Joytech controller.

GUITAR MECHANIC: This is possibly the coolest peripheral we've ever seen. Andy painted his axe pink, however. Tsk.

"OUTSIDE, YOU'LL FEEL STUPID. INSIDE, THIS'LL REALLY MAKE YOU FEEL LIKE A HERO"

Kapranos doing the Take Me Out leg kick. You're Lemmy, throwing back your head and bending notes like Uri Gellar bends spoons, You're Slash. You're Ozzy. You're pixie-fingered miserabilist Edgar Winter. Maybe – baby Jesus preserve you – you're even Brian May.

Guitar Hero isn't developer Harmonix's first foray into the rhythm-action arena. *Guitar Hero*'s actually almost identical to their previous titles

TOP FIVE PLUCKERS

- Prince
- Peter Frampton
- George Formby
- Bill And Ted
- Inbred Ted from Deliverance.

GAMEPIE

28% Plucking
22% Wailing
41% Strumming
9% Pretending to smash the guitar on the floor

ANSWER...

Guns 'N' Roses' November Rain – the song's also the longest to feature in the top ten, weighing in at eight minutes, nineteen seconds.

SOFT AND HARD: Easy notes like these are almost always followed by something hideously hendish.

anyone to enjoy, with 'real' guitar techniques like hammer-ons and pull-offs coming as you gain confidence. As with a real guitar, it doesn't matter how many fingers you've got on the fretboard below the highest note you're playing – just one of the subtle details that makes all the difference when things get tricky. And crucially, the gameplay's note for note – every twang corresponds to something in the song, even when you make the leap up to Expert setting.

DON'T FRET

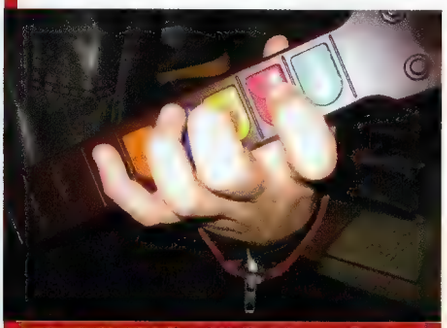
Of course, it helps that the song selection's exemplary. *Guitar Freaks* boasts a selection of tunes from J-pop to '80s floor-fillers, but *Hero* isn't about that – it's about rocking your face off. From strum-heavy Ramones numbers to tricksier tunes like Ziggy Stardust and Killer Queen, the one constant is that everything on the track list is excellent *for the guitar* – most have easy, repetitive verses punctuated by devilishly fiddly solos. Though they aren't all songs you'd necessarily listen to in everyday life – even Milf baulks at sticking Helmet on his iPod – this isn't *Singstar*, and playing an embarrassing number isn't as difficult as doing the vocals. Along with the thirty licensed tracks come eighteen competition winners, including excellent tunes like Monkey Steals Peach and the superb Caveman Rejoice. You'll be perfecting the early tunes after three days' solid play, but later tunes require almost autistic levels of concentration and Mariachi-level skill. The only problems are in the presentation. The lack of a Practice mode's criminal, considering that some songs end with a breathtakingly fiddly bit that you have to play for three or four minutes just to mess up in seconds. The inclusion of a lefty option's very thoughtful, but how come you have to go right back to the options menu to set it up? And it's a shame there isn't some sort of handicapping system to let one person play on Easy while another tackles Hard – duets between beginners and virtuosos tend to get frustrating or boring very quickly. Bum notes aside, though, it's telling that *two* members of Team PSM2 decided they ought to buy actual, real electric guitars after extended sessions on the *Hero*, one got hand-cramp from spending three hours trying to finish Bark At The Moon on hard, and another woke up all his flatmates at nine o'clock on a Saturday morning playing Sum-41. With two players, it goes beyond fun into an almost Zen-like experience – the first time you both twiddle perfect halves of a solo and crash together for a stereo-perfect chorus is an experience comparable to pulling a perfect through-ball-20-yarder in co-operative *PES*. And a *Karaoke Stage* tie-in's surely on the cards, *(please?)* which we're confidently predicing will be the best thing ever. Outside, yes, you'll look pretty stupid. But inside, well, this game really will make you feel like a hero. **Joel Snape**

■ Guitar Hero *is out April 7th.*

IT TAKES TWO TO ROCOCK! While great on your own, multi-player is where *Guitar Hero* is really at.

STRUM, ALL YE FAITHFUL

A good two months after playing the US version of Hero, we're still playing it after work, at parties and – on special days – first thing in the morning. The difference is, we're now playing it on Expert mode, where virtually every note has to be picked by hand and the orange button becomes your worst enemy. At this upper tier of play, pros recommend smearing the fretboard with Vaseline for faster action, and the lack of a Practice mode's more upsetting than ever. But nail it, and embarassing friends on the lower settings becomes almost routine. *Almost*.



CHORDING THE MIDDLE: Though Medium allows one finger to stay over each button, Hard demands this finger-placement.

STRUM AS YOU ARE: The strum bar can be rapidly flicked in both directions – essential for the really rapid-fire solos.

WALK TO THE CHIEF: Technically you can press [ ] to activate Star Power, but that's simply not the gentleman's way.

PSM² VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Simple to learn but freakishly addictive. – No easy/hard option for two players?	+ Excellent layout – it's easy to understand. – The 'heroes' are a bit generic, really.	+ It really feels like you're playing the tunes. – Some of them seem to go on forever.

LIFESPAN

Well, we're still not sick of it yet, especially after discovering a whole slew of gems among the unsigned artistes..

MINUTES ▮▮▮▮▮ YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
AMPLITUDE

IT'S WORSE THAN...
SINGSTAR

Harmonix say they want to give you – ordinary, untalented punter – the experience of playing music, and they've succeeded majestically. Terrific.

90

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Sega
Publisher: Sega
Players: 1 – 2
Memory Save: 24KB
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: Yes

PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer
"Real hedgehogs have very long tongues, which they use to spread saliva over the 500 or so spines along their backs. None are blue."

GAMEPIE
32% Slipstreaming
28% Bad powerslides
40% Wondering if Sonic will ever give us a high-speed game worthy of love

GAMEFAX
Driving
Action
Extreme Sports
Stupid

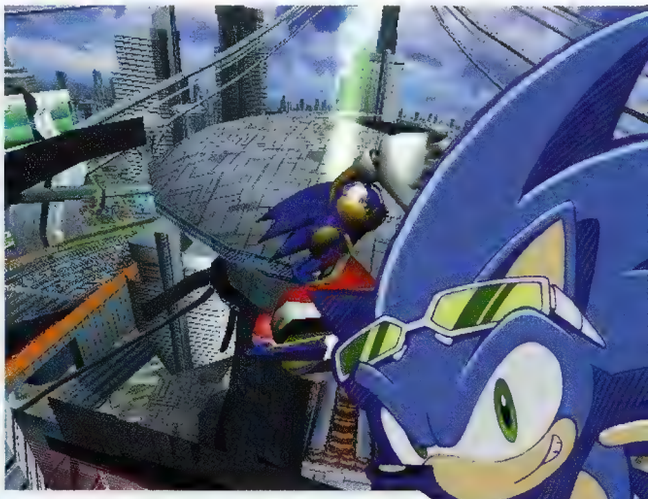
TRIVBURST
- Eight characters, five main tracks and a handful of battle arenas.
- Dozens of new boards to purchase, plus a co-op mode to boot.

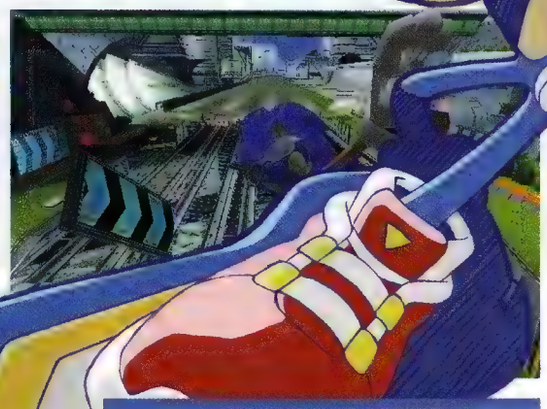
BOARD STUPID: It's fast, but it takes more to make a good racing game.

PEDIGREE CHUM: There are loads of extra riders to unlock.

GRID IRONY: The dash at the start is the funnest bit of eath race.

The MON£¥ $HOT
Riding in an opponent's slipstream allows you travel at speed without having to worry about nailing corners. They double up as half-pipes, too.





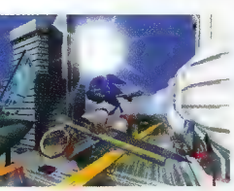
"RIDERS OF THE **LOST OPPORTUNITY**"

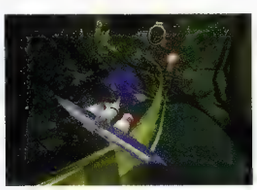
SONIC RIDERS

Why did the hedgehog cross the road? To enter his opponent's slipstream and gain max air, of course.

Sonic and 3D haven't been the best of friends. After building his name on the back of a 2D golden age some years ago, we've not seen a *Sonic* game on PS2 that's felt properly comfy with the console, or our hands. *Sonic Heroes* was flighty, messy and irritating to play, which somehow evolved into *Shadow The Hedgehog*, a game that felt flighty, messy and irritating to play, except with guns in. And now, with *Sonic Riders*... well, you can spot the pattern, only this one's got hoverboards.

There's plenty of substance to *Sonic Riders* – power-up pick-ups, powerslides, boosts, attacks, mid-air tricks, slipstreams, shortcuts and multiple paths for characters with differing abilities to exploit – but it all hangs together shoddily, and your first races will be a indecipherable disaster as you ping from corner to corner like a drunkard in a maze, superglued to eighth place. You just don't feel like there's scope to get better at it, only improve at memorizing the layout of each course, a feeling of that we can only describe as *Rider's* block. At those times when it all comes together, when you manage to take each corner in one slick chain, you'll come close to forgiving it, but it's only a matter of time before a hairpin turn or some such goes horribly wrong and you're left feeling a bit annoyed as everyone whizzes past.





RIDE AND PREJUDICE

It's not abysmal, though. The sensation of speed is powerful enough to clean your teeth, and there's the option to slipstream your rivals, using the lengthy tunnels of Turbulence that they trail behind them. And its starting grid system – where a well-timed run-up can give you a decent boost – is a great idea. It does have some hidden talents, sure, but so do cabbages, and no-one's making a game about them. *Sonic Rider's* formula still has potential, but it needs better implementation.

If you're not the kind of person who collects the comic, watches the cartoon or lets the phone go for 100 rings ('extra life!!') before answering it – the kind of *Sonic* fan who *wouldn't* find the cut-scenes to be the height of whiny-voiced irritation – then you'll find *Sonic Riders* to be imprecise, skittish and frustrating. A bit like trying to play snooker with a baguette, really. **Steven Bailey**

■ Sonic Riders *is out on March 31st.*

ROUTE CANAL

Much like *Sonic Heroes*, each character has one of three special abilities: speed, fly and strength. Each stage is littered with small signposts denoting shortcuts available to each character type, too small for you to see during your first few laps. Speed characters get to grind their way along specially-placed rails, Strength characters can barge things out of the way and Fly characters can soar through rings in the sky. It feels like its coming down to one thing, though – memory, rather than skill.

FLY, MY PRETTY: Boost rings propel Fly racers through the air, but you've still got to aim your character as they bounce around.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Slipstreaming opponents is fun... – ...but racing can get muddled swiftly.	+ Plenty colourful, while levels zip by speedily.. – Visuals have a handful of bald spots..	+ Music's *amazing* if you high-NRG soundtracks... – ...but no-one who's not a mental likes those.

LIFESPAN
Plenty of characters to unlock and special boards to save up for, but you'll be all too familiar with the tracks within an hour.
MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
JACKED

IT'S WORSE THAN...
JAK X

A hard game to love, there's some worth in there for Sonic fans with limitless patience. Otherwise, it's another garbled 3D Sonic outing to add to the pile...

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INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Zipper
Publisher: Sony
Players: 1-32
Memory Save: 499 KB
Widescreen: Yes
50-60Hz: Yes
Surround Sound: Yes

QUESTION...
In a game that otherwise takes pride in accuracy, two of the three operational locations that you'll wage war in aren't named. Why?

PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.
"The Navy SEAL's Special Warfare Badge is nicknamed 'the Budweiser', because it looks a bit like the logo of said pissy brew."

GAMEFAX
War
Action
Network Play
Violent

TRIVBURST
- Score provided by James Michael Dooley, who worked on, er, Madagascar. And Black Hawk Down.
- Developed in collaboration with the Navy SEALs.
- 31 authentic weapons.

The MON£¥ $HOT
Some say it's Republican Propaganda but do those lily-livered pen-pushers know what it's like to be a Navy SEAL on the front line? Eh?
PSM2 BRONZE AWARD
SPECTER
JESTER
KILLJOY
SIMPLE
x27/30
x2

"SOCOM ON FEEL THE NOISE"

SOCOM 3 U.S. NAVY SEALS

It's out in the UK at last, but is there a decent single-player game for those who don't go online? Let's see...

SOCOM will be filed in the annals of videogame history (along with *Counter Strike*) under 'O', with a sub-reference to 'R'. That is to say 'Online' with a 'Rubbish Single Player' tab. The third in this legendary series, unlike its expansion pack-like predecessor, has been rebuilt with a new engine, tarted up and enhanced. Zipper have obviously, desperately, spent their time trying to create an offline experience that mirrors its online brilliance. But have they delivered? File under 'N' for 'No'.

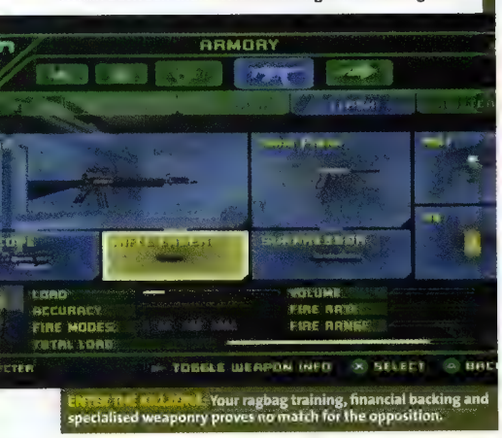
To be fair, they've had a bash. There's a tangible graphical leap that produces thick jungle bush in South Asia and top-notch urban settings in both Poland and North Africa. The maps are huge sprawling war-areas with loads of multiple routes and objectives you can complete in a number of ways. There are more vehicles than the Gumball Rally and enough weapons to arouse any wannabe soldier. But it's not what's been added that's the problem. It's what's been left in.

Dodgy squad AI. They veer from carrying out commands with ruthless efficiency to ignoring your most basic of requests. A context-sensitive box flashes up at a door entrance and you send the order. They pile in, one after the other, checking the corners and neutralising any terrorist dumb enough to give the finger to the land of the free. Poetry in motion. And then you'll ask Bravo to take a position on the right flank. "Absolutely, Sir!"

"IT'S NOT WHAT'S BEEN ADDED THAT'S THE PROBLEM – IT'S WHAT'S BEEN LEFT IN..."

PIMP YOUR ARMOURY

Yep, there's now a gazillion combinations of weapons for each solider, so you can choose the most appropriate tools for each missions. Although you can pick up enemy weapons, you're very much committed to what you take in and the specialists in the team can't really be relied upon. *SOCOM 3* cries out for a Conflict-style option to switch between characters and change tactics mid-game.



ENTER THE KILLZONE: Your ragbag training, financial backing and specialised weaponry proves no match for the opposition.

PUBTALK

The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.

"The first Navy Seal teams were commissioned in 1962 to work in the Vietnam war."

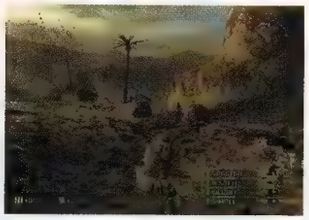
GAMEPIE

50% Defending American Interests
30% Shouting "Fire at will!"
20% Working out how to get online

ANSWER

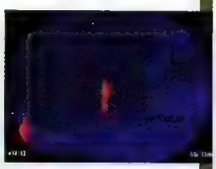
Bangladesh was removed after complaints that the game portrayed the country as a 'terrorist state'. Morocco is the other touchy country.

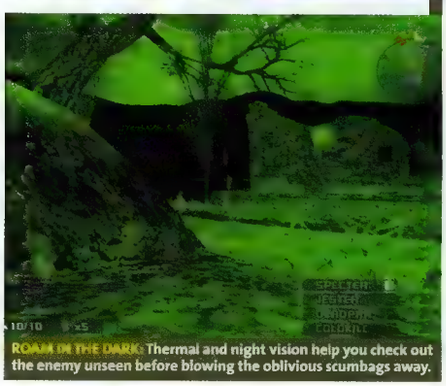
WATERY DEATH: The combat boat features the fastest, hardest and most dangerous machine gun in gaming.



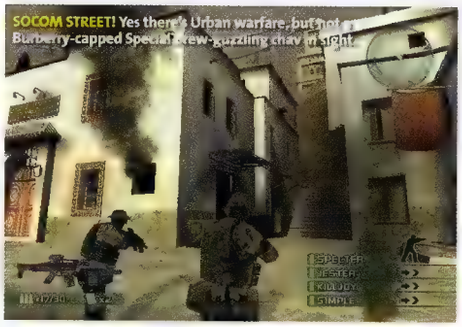
NIGHT VISION

SOCOM 3 **comes into its own during the night missions and really presses home your tactical and technical advantage over the ideologically 'off message'/ irresponsibly-led cannon fodder you'll come across. The huge array of customisable weaponry lets you attach pretty much anything to any gun. So when night falls, you can fix night-vision and thermal scopes to your heaters, making your previously hidden enemies light up like Christmas trees. And then you can blast them all to Hell and back. Excellent.**





ROAM IN THE DARK: Thermal and night vision help you check out the enemy unseen before blowing the oblivious scumbags away.



SOCOM STREET! Yes there's Urban warfare, but not a Burberry-capped Special Forces-guzzling chav in sight.

HIGH-TIMES: As ever, taking the high ground gives you the tactical advantage.

crackles through the speaker and you charge up the other side. Then you notice that those blue dots, your brothers in arms, are on the edge of the radar pointing their very expensive, dangerous weapons at the privet hedge they're not supposed to be hiding behind any more. Cheers guys.

Inevitably this places more emphasis on your character than a squad shooter really should. If you want a job done properly, do it yourself. So it's a case of taking on entire armies practically single-handedly as you hope your crew can keep up and provide supporting fire with varying, yet ultimately unreliable, effectiveness.

Enemy AI has improved, though. They take intelligent cover, hunt in packs and react to your own movements. You'll have to watch the buggers too. A hit-sensitive system means if you shoot them in the legs, you'll put them down, only for them to survive and take another pop. This forces a contradiction. On the one hand you're encouraged to overwhelm enemies so you can take them prisoner and spare their blood. On the other, it's worth putting a shell into the skull of a seemingly-incapacitated enemy in case the dirty insurgent staggers to his feet and shoots you in the back.

JUST KEEP MOVING

Thankfully such moral inconsistencies are entirely absent from the vehicles, which bring arcade relief to proceedings. They're a lark to bomb about in but they do feel shallow – we'd rather see less focus on numbers and more on quality. The attack boat, for example, handles like a tin bath rather than an agile combat ship. Then there's the firing and moving problem. Whatever the vehicle, if you want to take down terrorists, you'll have to put on the handbrake or drop anchor and switch to your desired gun position. Surprisingly for members of one of the world's elite forces, your team-mates are inept at shooting people in front of them. So, just like in a real war, you have to park up in the middle of a battlefield, then switch to the gunner to take the best shot. Ridiculous.

If you couldn't plug this in and get online, then you'd be left with an average identi-kit shooter with flaws that gives as much as it takes. But online – if you can hack it – is a 32-player shooting experience with enlarged maps, all the vehicles and weapons from the single-player game and a couple of superb new game modes.

Convoy, for instance, splits combatants into two groups, with the terrorists needing to pick up and escape with supplies while the Seals stop them in which teamwork and vehicles are crucial. 'Control' has two teams racing across the map to place markers at various points in a mode that we suspect will be replicated everywhere soon.

Until *PES5*, *SOCOM* was the best – if not only – reason to get a network adapter. But if you're not online, there's little here that's not been done before. And done better. **Pete Webber**

■ ***SOCOM 3 is out on April 21st.***

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Open level structure and tight controls. – Squad AI is a massive let-down.	+ Excellent jungle environments – Some blocky textures are monotonous	+ Orchestral score hits the right notes – Dreadful cockney accents.

LIFESPAN

If you've got a network adapter, how does forever sound? Solo, though, not for very long.

MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...

RAINBOW SIX LOCKDOWN

IT'S WORSE THAN...

FSW: 10 HAMMERS

Online play would score high 80s, but offline *SOCOM 3* is an average squad shooter that treads the same tired path as many before it.

78

DETAILS
Developer: Sony
Publisher: Sony
Players: 1-8
Memory Save: 45kb
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: No

PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer
"Other famous Buzz's include Buzz Lightyear, the toy spaceman; Buzz Aldrin, the real spaceman, and Buzz, the 2000 album by Steps."

GAMEPIE
80% Questions you don't know the answer to.
10% Questions you do know the answer to.
5% Laughing.
5% Swearing.

GAMEFAX
Stupid
Funny
Multi-player
Addictive

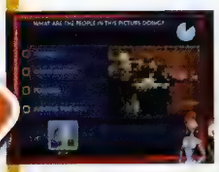
TRIVBURST
- Like *Buzz: The Music Quiz*, but with general knowledge.
- Yet more Jason Donovan! Steady, ladies.
- Up to eight players.

The MON£Y $HOT
This is Buzz, as voiced excellently by Jason Donovan. He may look like a rugby ball cut in half, but he's got a mean way with a put-down.

PSM2 BRONZE AWARD

ROUND ROBIN

The new rounds, then. There's Ask A Friend, which as discussed is flawed and not very different from the *Music Quiz*'s Buzz Stop. There's one where a video clip runs and you press the buzzer when a key word appears, but that was done last time too, except with music. And there's Hitman, where you fire a gun at a fellow player if you answer correctly, and take away their 'lives' until they're out of the round. This we like, and lets you gang up on the leader, or just the person you hate most. Hurrah!



"NOT TIME TO BUZZ OFF QUITE YET"

BUZZ: THE BIG QUIZ

We're still feeling the buzz, but maybe not *quite* as much as before...

The very first question we were asked by the *Big Quiz* was this: "In England, dogs say 'woof woof'. What do they say in Albania?" Read that back to yourself. What do dogs say... *in Albania*? Throw in videos of an orchestra playing cucumbers like trumpets and the host Buzz showing a snap of beach, hollering "Ibiiii-zaaa!" and then asking a question about Chekhov's The Seagull (seaside? Seagulls? Geddit? Caramba) and you'll realise that, somehow, *Buzz* is even more ridiculous than before.

Which, simultaneously, is both good and bad. Presentation-wise, the increased insanity is terrific – there are loads of new characters to choose from (including a Bruce Lee type, Einstein and a Red Indian) and Buzz himself is far more entertaining than before, yelling at his host to "SHADDAP!" and, er, regularly dragging his arse across the stage floor. Yes, like a dog. Yes, like a dog doing *that*. Yep, as presentation goes, *Buzz* sparkles more than ever.

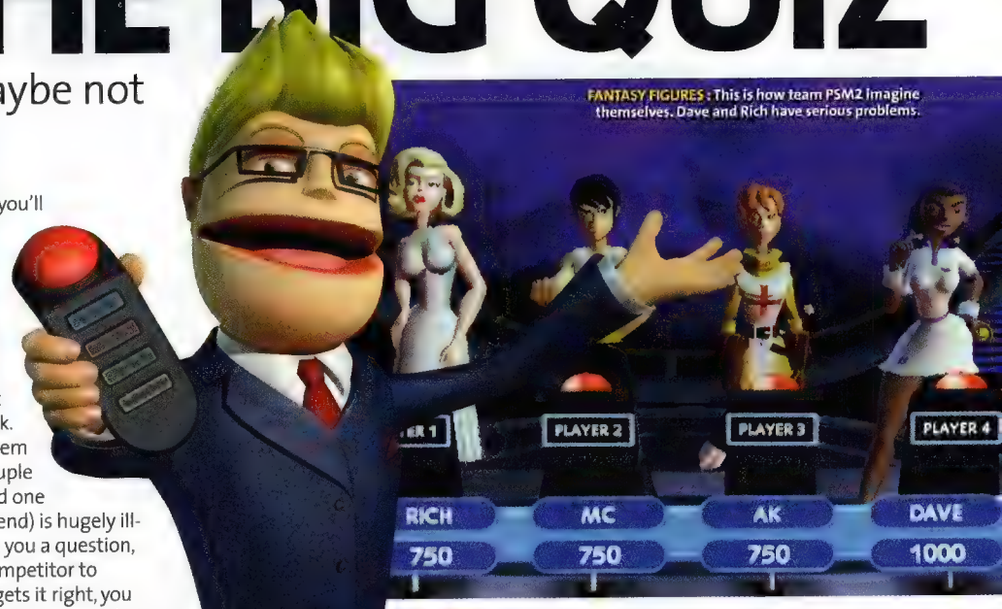
SIMPLY THE GUESSED

It's just that the ridiculousness now imposes on the questions themselves. Last time, for the most part, if you knew more answers than your mates, you'd win. This time, that often doesn't feel like the case. Particularly criminal in this is Look Before You Leap. In the first game, you'd hear a tune, and a question would gradually reveal itself for you to have a guess at – but if you knew the song, you'd (mostly) get the right answer. Now? A picture will appear from close up and pan into something recognisable. But you'll only ever get the answer from pure guesswork – a frog wearing a crown? *A cheetah on top of a landrover*? It's hilarious, yes – but reliant on pure luck.

Another problem – there's only a couple of new rounds, and one of these (Ask A Friend) is hugely ill-advised – it shows you a question, then you pick a competitor to answer, and if he gets it right, you both get points. Which means that you have to impose a no-conferring rule, or else you can just discuss the answer until you think you know. And by our *second game* it was repeating questions. This is especially true with picture rounds – the same shots crop up over and over.

Still, *Buzz* remains good fun, especially if you can find seven other people to play against. Is it better or worse than before? That's subjective – we prefer the first game, yet if you don't know much about music but can recite the Guinness Book Of Records backwards, this is superior. Probably worse, then. **David Cook**

■ Buzz: The Big Quiz *is out now.*



PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ With enough mates, more fun than anything.
– Questions can be a bit *too* leftfield.

GRAPHICS
+ Looks as cartoony and enticing as it should.
– No real complaints. They do the job just fine.

SOUND
+ Jason Donovan is now officially cool.
– Although his voice gets repetitive eventually.

LIFESPAN
The questions start to repeat a bit early, but with four or more players, you'll be coming back to this for ages.
MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
SINGSTAR POPWORLD

IT'S WORSE THAN...
BUZZ: THE MUSIC QUIZ

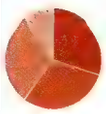
This new *Buzz* places far more emphasis on silliness and laughs than it does on actual knowledge. Whether that's a good thing or not depends on your viewpoint.

76

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Sony
Publisher: Sony
Players: 1 – 8
Memory Save: 400k
Widescreen: Yes
50-60Hz: Yes
Surround Sound: No

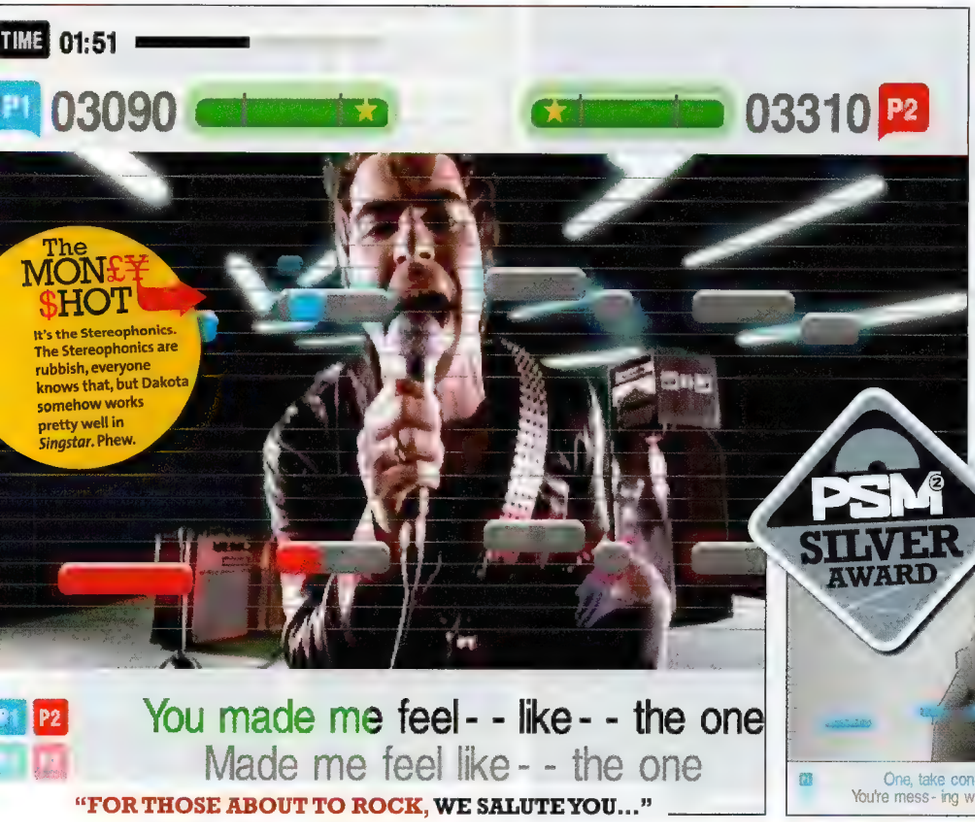
PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer
"Sod this non-scoring lark – I've got some proper karaoke back at my flat, if you're interested..."



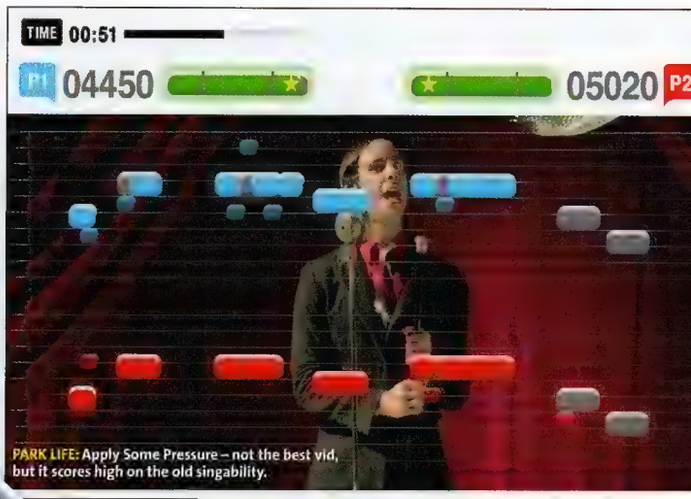
GAMEPIE
30% Really trying to win
30% Playing to the crowd
30% Dancing like a loon
10% Falling over

GAMEFAX

TRIVBURST
- Three difficulty levels.
- Party, Duet and Solo modes, including Pass The Mic
- Disc-swap mode makes it compatible with all other *Singstars*.


TIME 01:51
P1 03090
03310 P2
The MON£Y $HOT
It's the Stereophonics. The Stereophonics are rubbish, everyone knows that, but Dakota somehow works pretty well in *Singstar*. Phew.
You made me feel - - like - - the one
Made me feel like - - the one

"FOR THOSE ABOUT TO ROCK, WE SALUTE YOU..."



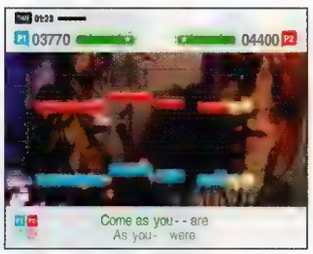
PARK LIFE: Apply Some Pressure – not the best vid, but it scores high on the old singability.

SINGSTAR ROCKS

Because *Singstar Rolls* just didn't have the same zing to it...

Caution: however much you want it to, *Singstar Rocks* is not going to make good on the promises its trailer delivers. If you set it up on a rooftop, it isn't going to make traffic cops double-take or grannies fetch their binoculars, nor will it make bead-wearing indie girls give you that kind of wistfully bemused look that suggests they'd like to come up and let you kiss their faces. We played it next to an open window for nearly six hours and the only people who noticed were builders. They suggested we kiss *something*, but it wasn't their faces.

What *Singstar* is going to deliver is exactly the same experience seen in previous games, but stripped of all its fat, squeezed into a pair of faded jeans and sucking in its cheekbones. The voice-activated Pong game from *Singstar 80s*? Gone. The rap-o-meter? Gone, for obvious reasons. Duet mode? Still there, but it isn't *quite* as good because there aren't any 'proper' duets on the tracklist. Let's be clear – all you've got here are 30 songs, a few ways to sing them and some nice videos to watch. It's still better than *Karaoke Stage*, though.

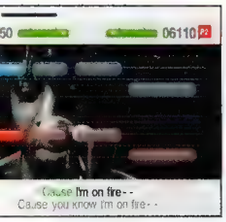


CAUGHT INDIE ACT

That playlist, then. It's more about populism than singable songs, which is a bit of a mixed blessing. Clear winner is Maximo Park's Apply Some Pressure, a yelpy-shouty number that demands to be belted out as loud as your lungs can manage. The Hives and Kasabian's Club Foot work just as well. This is one of *Rocks'* strengths – unlike earlier games, which let you fiddle results by singing at the wrong octave and mumbling a bit, these tunes are more about wobbling your voice properly, which feels a bit more skilful.

Less sensible and competitive – but more fun, which comes in handy at parties – are Blur's Song 2 and Franz Ferdinand's Do You Want To, which are both heavy on the woo-be-doos when you're too full of pomegranate martinis to read the words properly. On the surprisingly-good-frat-rock side, there's Bowling For Soup's 1985, and when you're too far gone to care, there's Queen's Don't Stop Me Now. The only real turnip in the song-barrel is KT Tunstall, who ought to be on *Singstar Whimsy*. Still, the only way Sony can go from here is to allow four mics at once via the twin USB ports for some full-on party singing. Well, that or include some sort of inflatable indie girl in the box. **Joel Snape**

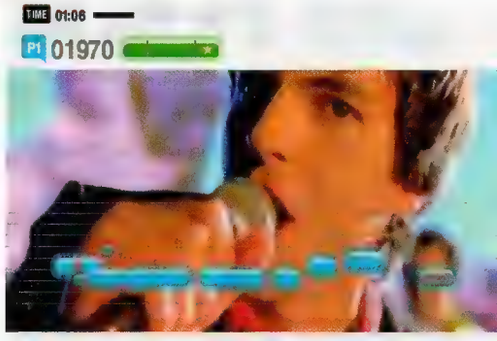
■ *Singstar Rocks is out on April 14th.*



THE FIRST RULE OF SING CLUB...

Singstar, of course, is a game for gentlemen – it's eminently possible to cheat, but doing that ruins the fun. So here, in the interests of fairness, are the rules of fair conduct. Read and learn.

- No mumbling. If you don't know the words, you have to read them off the screen. There has to be *some* benefit to knowing all the lyrics to Paint It Black.
- No singing at the wrong octave. If Morten Harket can sing 'Meeeee!' at that pitch, so can you.
- No deliberately hogging the mic in Pass The Mic mode. It's basically cheating.
- If you can put together a decent score without looking at the screen – perhaps while waving or pelvic thrusting at the crowd – then a narrow contest will be declared a moral victory on your part. This renders all other rules redundant.



DON'T LOOK NOW: Don't bother looking at the screen. It'll only hamper your 'interpretation' of The Killers.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ The video for An Honest Mistake's a corker. – Not as eye-pleasing as a Sugababes video.	+ It's all fully licensed – you can't fault that. – More vocal effects might be nice.	+ As good as ever. – Completely unchanged. And more duets would be nice.

LIFESPAN
One to dig out every time you get people over, rather than play constantly for a week.
MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
SINGSTAR POPWORLD

IT'S WORSE THAN...
GUITAR HERO

As an expansion of your *SingStar* library, this is arguably more essential than *80s* and *Popworld*, depending on who your friends are. If only it worked with a guitar.

80

INFOSTRIP

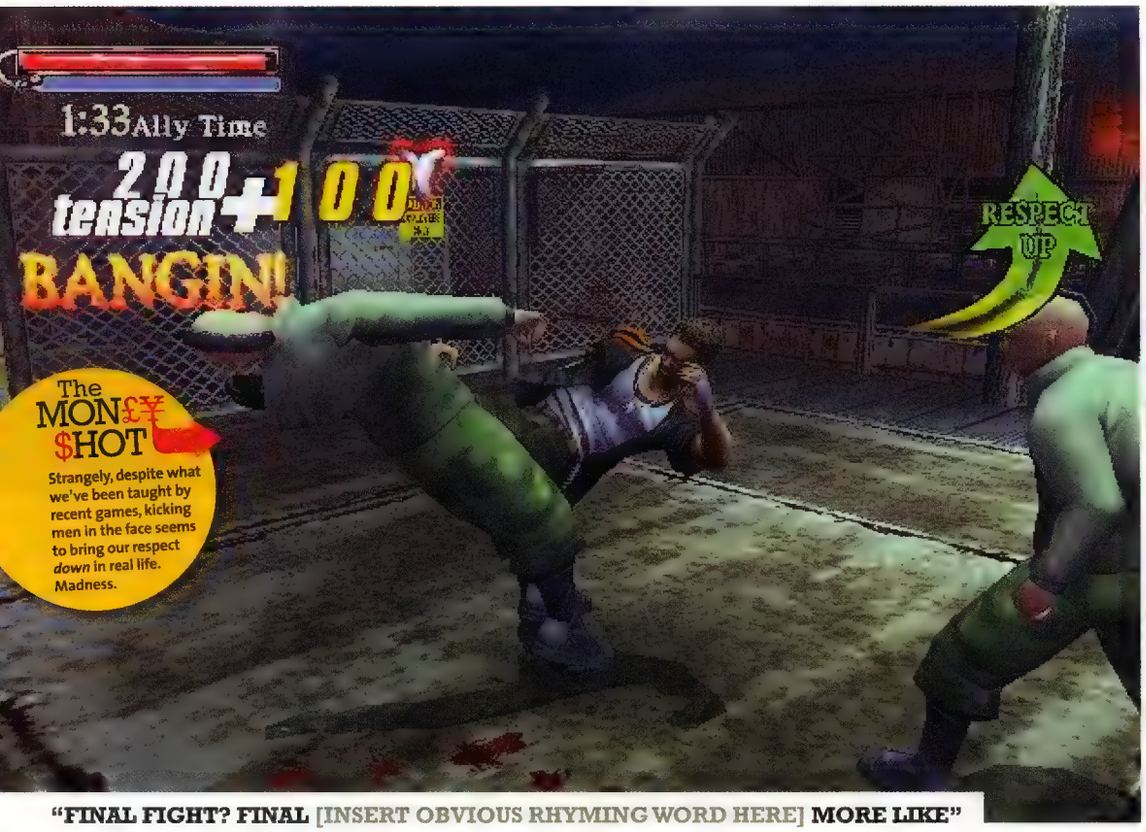
DETAILS
Developer: Capcom
Publisher: Capcom
Players: 1-2
Memory Save: 400k
Widescreen: Yes
50-60Hz: Yes
Surround Sound: Yes

PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer
"*Final Fight* predates an actual wrestler (Jesse 'The Body' Ventura) winning an election by more than a decade. Life imitating art."

GAMEPIE
30% Kicking enemies.
30% Stabbing enemies.
30% Shooting enemies.
10% Kicking, stabbing and shooting civilians.

GAMEFAX
Easy
Violent
GTA Clone
Shit

TRIVBURST
- Godawful two-player mode.
- Build up 'respect'. Now *there's* originality.
- The original game is included. It's far better.


1:33 Ally Time
200
tension +100
BANGIN'
RESPECT UP
The MON£¥ $HOT
Strangely, despite what we've been taught by recent games, kicking men in the face seems to bring our respect *down* in real life. Madness.

EVEN FINALLER!

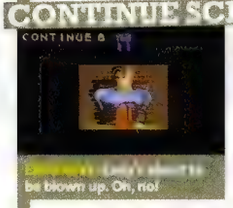
The name *Final Fight*'s something of a lie, of course, as there have been *four* instalments in the series so far. The original's included with *Streetwise*, and, well, look at the following comparison:

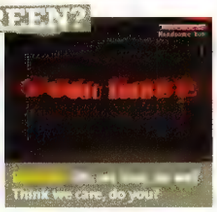
MAIN HERO?

CODY?

DOORS?

CONTINUE SCREEN?





To summarise, then: *Final Fight* is miles better than *Streetwise*, and it came out nearly 15 years ago.

"FINAL FIGHT? FINAL [INSERT OBVIOUS RHYMING WORD HERE] MORE LIKE"

FINAL FIGHT STREETWISE

Final Fight? We can only hope it really is...

Back when the original *Final Fight* came out, roaming beat-'em-ups were fun. Not 'gritty', not 'urban', not 'adult' – just fun. Fun because they were well thought out, stuffed with gang members who looked like dancers from Michael Jackson videos and full of interesting environments. And then, somewhere, they lost the plot. All of them.

Yes, Capcom just couldn't resist it. *Streetwise* is full of adult bits (characters swear! You go in grot-shops! There are posters with ladies on them!), it's gritty (you start the game in prison and chat to hookers) and it's urban (the environments all look grey). What it certainly isn't is fun.

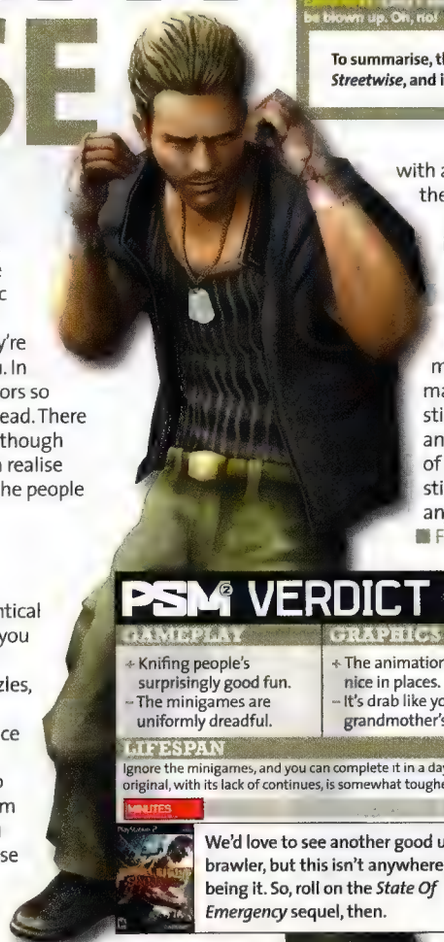
Fighting's simple, and exactly as you'd expect. There's a block, a grab, and two different hit buttons. Until you've bought some skills, combos are fairly limited – and it's pointless to learn new ones anyway, because the only one you need is the double-hit-then-grab 'n' knee option available from the start of the game. Later, you get guns – but with no aiming system, you're reducing to relying on a lock-on mechanic that'll see you pointing your weapon at men hidden around corners because they're 'closer' than the ones right in front of you. In other bits, you'll end up in fights in corridors so narrow that you can only see your own head. There are even attempts at stealth elements, although they're so badly done that you don't even realise they're there until you've knifed forty of the people you're supposed to be sneaking past.

STREET CRIME

And the further you play, the more the complaints mount. Hotel level full of identical doors, most of which are 'locked', so that you have to check all of them before you can progress? Yes. Keypads that are logic puzzles, as if drug barons rely on their enemies being really stupid instead of – for instance – giving their men keycards? Yes. Guard dogs that can only be killed with a stomp attack which isn't really designed for them so they take turns savaging you until you die? Pickups that you can't pick up because they land too close to walls? Yes and yes. Even the two-player mode is a shambles, lasting all of ten minutes with a 'To Be Continued...' tagged on at the end. Shameful.

What's most telling, though, is the inclusion of the first *Final Fight* as a 'bonus'. It only lasts an hour, but it's stuffed with better character design, more bosses, more inventive backgrounds and more atmosphere than *Streetwise* manages across six hours of play. It's still shit, of course, because the animation looks terrible and some of it's hopelessly unfair – but we'd still rather play it than *Streetwise* any day of the week. **Joel Snape**

■ Final Fight Streetwise *is out now.*



PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Knifing people's surprisingly good fun. – The minigames are uniformly dreadful.	+ The animation's quite nice in places. – It's drab like your grandmother's curtains.	+ Some of the speech is quite funny. – Voiced by people who can't speak English.

LIFESPAN
Ignore the minigames, and you can complete it in a day. The original, with its lack of continues, is somewhat tougher.
MINUTES ... YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
CRIME LIFE
IT'S WORSE THAN...
URBAN REIGN

We'd love to see another good urban brawler, but this isn't anywhere near to being it. So, roll on the *State Of Emergency* sequel, then.

40

TWO DECADES OF AGGRESSION
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JUNE 12TH 2006
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INFOSTRIP

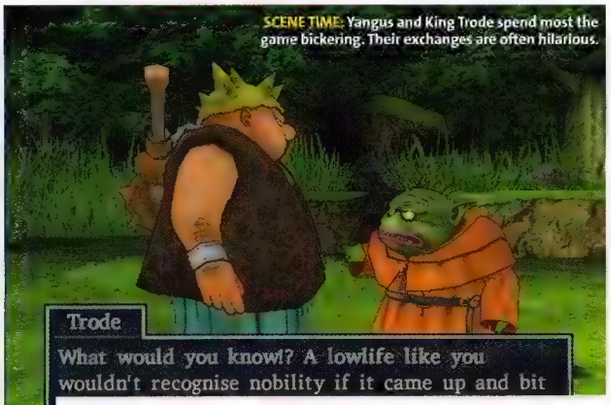
DETAILS
Developer: Level 5
Publisher: Square Enix
Players: 1
Memory Save: 176kb
Widescreen: Yes
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: No

PREVIOUSLY IN PSM2...
"A NEAR-PERFECT RPG. IMPORT IT NOW IF YOU CAN"
PSM2#71

GAMEFAX
RPG
Sequel
Japanese
Goblins

TRIVBURST
- Four characters with unique skills, abilities and weapons.
- Around 150 hours of gameplay.
- Thousands of secrets and side-quests to discover.

The MON£¥ $HOT
The entire game is like one big money shot, but if we had to pick one it'd be exploring. From bustling towns to endless fields, you really feel like you're wandering around a real world full of life and character.


SCENE TIME: Yangus and King Trode spend most the game bickering. Their exchanges are often hilarious.
Trode
What would you know!? A lowlife like you wouldn't recognise nobility if it came up and bit

MAGIC MARKER: Jessica's physical attacks are weak, but spells like these certainly aren't. Don't mess.
Jessica casts Kafrizzle!

PSM2 GOLD AWARD

"THIS CURSE IS A BLESSING"

DRAGON QUEST
JOURNEY OF THE CURSED KING

It's lost the 'VIII' for its European debut, but the *San Andreas* of RPGs still reduces *Final Fantasy*'s hit points to zero and claims its magical role-playing crown.

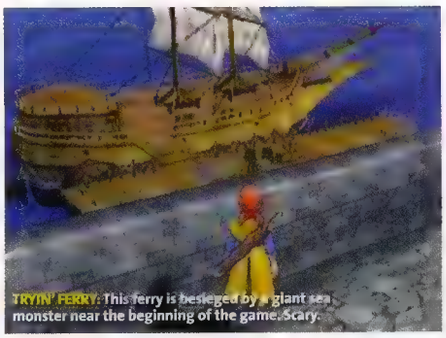
POT OF GOLD

About an hour into the game, King Trode invents an alchemy pot that you can use to create special items. There are hundreds of recipes hidden throughout the game in bookcases, but you can attempt your own by combining pretty much anything in your inventory. For example, mixing an item of clothing with a metallic object gives you powerful armour that you can't find anywhere else in the game world. An excellent feature.

Instant items don't appear instantly – you have to leave your creation bubbling and simmering away for five minutes.

This is an old-fashioned game with old-fashioned values that eschews modern trends in favour of simplistic, vintage role-playing. That doesn't mean it's outdated – all it means is that instead of trying to adapt to the demands of the 2006 gamer, it sticks with the long-established Square Enix traditions of random battles, turn-based combat and a vast world map full of secrets and surprises. So while *Final Fantasy* tries desperately to streamline and modernize, *Dragon Quest* leans back in its easy chair, keeps it real and blossoms as a result. You can keep your genre-blending and emergent AI – just give us a lush world to explore and monsters to beat up.

The most impressive thing is the world map. It's totally seamless and, thanks to the absence of any loading times you really feel like you're travelling across a vast continent. It's gorgeous too; lush with detail, from dense foliage and shifting sunlight to immense mountain ranges and scurrying animals. You spend the first quarter of the game wandering on foot, but vehicles are introduced later that make travel a lot less of a chore. Climbing to a high point and savouring the gorgeous vistas is a real treat – the draw distance is almost limitless.


TRYIN' FERRY: This ferry is besieged by a giant sea monster near the beginning of the game. Scary.

BRILLIANT BY DESIGN

Design-wise it's perfect. Legendary anime artist Akira Toriyama's character designs and developer Level 5's trademark cel-shading combine to great effect and it looks like a cartoon come to life. Any non-player character in *Dragon Quest* has infinitely more personality than the entire cast of *50 Cent: Bulletproof* combined and the enemies are particularly memorable, notably the smiley slime creatures. Our only gripe is that a lot of the villages look almost identical with items and houses being recycled frequently.

Oh, and there's a game in there too. The turn-based combat's massively uncomplicated and

TOP 5 KINGS

- Elvis Presley
- King from *Tekken*
- Don King
- King Kong
- The King of All Cosmos

GAMEPIE

40% Random battles.
30% Exploring the huge world map.
20% Talking to villagers.
10% Earning experience points.

PUBTALK

The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.
"Because of its popularity, in Japan it's against the law for a *Dragon Quest* game to be released on a weekday. Too many people were skipping work and school to play it."

THE SLIME CONTROLLER

Not only does this absolutely inspired peripheral double as a fetching ornament, but it's also a controller that, despite making your hands ache, looks absolutely brilliant. Look at his little face! If you're mad keen on *Dragon Quest* you can import one from pretty much any overseas videogame website. It even comes in silver, but we prefer the blue version ourselves.

[illegible] it's probably the least ergonomic control pad in the world, but *just look at his little face!* We love it.

"IT REALLY FEELS LIKE YOU'RE TRAVELLING ACROSS A VAST GORGEOUS CONTINENT"

WHAT IT DOES SO RIGHT

Dragon Quest makes most RPGs look faintly ridiculous, but where does it succeed where others have failed? Let's take a look...

THE CHARACTERS: Look at him on the left from *Shadow Hearts*. He's your pretty clichéd RPG hero. Boring design and absolutely no reason to like him. Now look at our hero (right). Brilliant, isn't he? He doesn't speak a word throughout the entire game, but he's instantly likeable.

THE SETTING: Instead of boring cyber-punk futurescapes and dank caves, the world of *Dragon Quest* is a gorgeous, colourful dream. Every village, castle and mountain range has a history and you get the impression that it's a fully-developed universe. This is where most RPGs fail.

THE STORY: Instead of trying to be edgy, shocking or chock-full of legend and mythos, *Dragon Quest* is a simple tale based around a classical fantasy universe of kings, castles and monsters. The characters' backstories are also surprisingly emotional, especially templar knight Angelo's.

THE COMBAT: Since *Final Fantasy VIII* on PSone, RPG developers have been feverishly trying to make their combat systems different by filling them with needless stats and options. *Dragon Quest* goes back to basics and keeps things pleasantly minimalist. It's still pretty hardcore, mind.

THE VOICE ACTING: The RPG is pretty infamous for having hammy voice acting. No such qualms with *Dragon Quest* though. It's very British, but it's charming, funny and, most of all, well-acted. It shames *Final Fantasy X*'s dismal voicework.

WHAT DOES DRAGON QUEST HAVE IN COMMON WITH 'THE BILL'?

Because of *Dragon Quest*'s UK-centric voice acting cast, it features a lot of B-list actors you'll probably recognize from various TV shows. For example, Yangus is voiced by comedian Ricky Grover who you may (well, probably not) remember as 'Bulla' from The [illegible] Clock Show. Simon Greenhall also stars, who'll better know as bumbling geordie [illegible] from 'Allo 'Allo. Partridge X also features a load of lesser-known bods, almost all of whom have appeared on The Bill at one point or another. So, yeah – it's a tenuous link, but a link nonetheless. A special mention goes out to actress Victoria Shalet who not only voices Princess Medea in the game, but also played Harmony Parker in kid's TV show The Queen's Nose. We had an slightly terrifying crush on her when we were younger, but we won't go into that now. Unless you want us to. If you do, send a letter to us. We'll devote a page to her. Maybe.

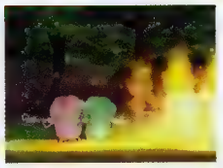
VIEW TO A SKILL: The sun shifts in real-time behind a glorious mountain range. Stunning.

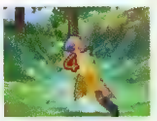
CAST OF THOUSANDS: Toriyama's gorgeous character designs are inspired by Japanese anime.

FREE COMPANY: It's the greenest game in the world, just look at all that lush foliage. It's gorgeous.

PEEP SHOW: Even NPCs have their own stories. This guy is deciding whether to give up his life of crime.

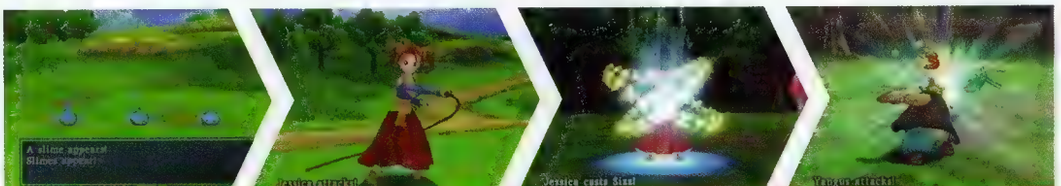
CHEST OF SHOW: Jessica's ample bosom jiggles when she runs. We don't find her sexy, though. <ahem>





THE COMBAT SYSTEM EXPLAINED

Battles in *Dragon Quest* may appear simple, but only the hardcore will master its many intricacies. As with most turn-based games, the key is knowing what abilities to use and when. Should you spend your move on healing? Or attacking? Maybe you should 'psyche up' your characters – which increases your attack power, but lowers your defence? Alternatively, you can intimidate the enemy and make them flee in terror. So many choices...



FIGHT LIFE: Increasing a character's stats in a particular field improves their attacks. Upgrade Jessica's 'sex appeal', for instance, and she'll be able to lure enemies to their doom by blowing a sexy kiss or, er, squeezing her breasts. Yangus, however, prefers to smash them up with his giant hammer. Each to their own...

you'll get the hang of it in minutes, but that doesn't mean the game's easy. It's actually bastard hard and if you're going to get anywhere you'll have to spend an hour here and there levelling up. That's the old routine of running around the world map earning experience points before attempting a boss is back in full effect. What we especially like about the battles, though, is how the enemies behave. If you're fighting a cat for example, sometimes it'll start rolling around and washing its face, completely ignoring you. Sounds pointless, but there are hundreds of these little 'events' and they make the fight scenes feel sort of 'alive' instead of tedious and repetitive as they so easily could've been.

Between scraps, your goal is to hunt down an evil jester called Dhoulmagus and return King Trode (the little green goblin man) to his original human form. The plot is pretty standard stuff but the script is genuinely funny and the voice-acting top notch – if a little 'Monty Python' at times. To track down Dhoulmagus you have to travel the land, visiting towns and helping people out along the way in exchange for information. Most of these quests involve entering a dungeon or castle

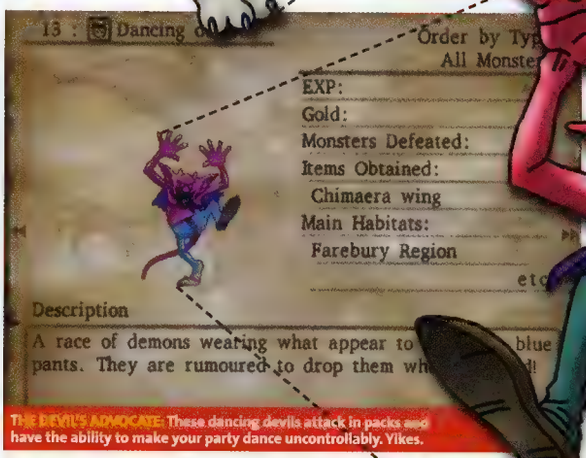
FRIEND OR FOE?

This could well be the first game in history where we actually *love* the enemies. Every one has its own personality and behaviour during combat and we actually felt a little guilty clubbing them to death. Here are some of our favourites, although there are over two hundred more to discover...

SLIME AND LIKE: The loveable slime has been the mascot of the *Dragon Quest* series since it first appeared on the NES in 1986.

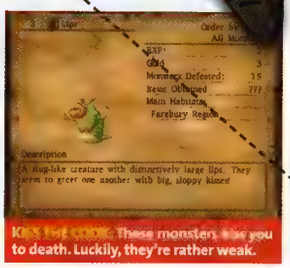
A BIG PAIN: The slime knights can be a real pain. Their sword attacks are powerful and they're expert dodgers.

CATS MEOW: These cats play around during combat, which is a good time to get them off-guard and brutally murder them.

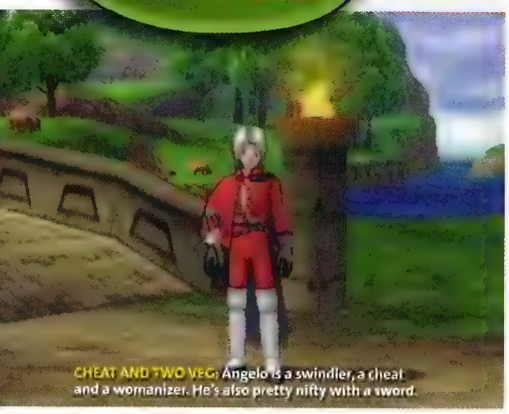


THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: These dancing devils attack in packs and have the ability to make your party dance uncontrollably. Yikes.

SALT AND PEPPER: Two scary pepper men skewered together. Only in *DQ*.



KISS THE COOK: These monsters kiss you to death. Luckily, they're rather weak.



CHEAT AND TWO VEG: Angelo is a swindler, a cheat and a womanizer. He's also pretty nifty with a sword.

and defeating a boss, which has been RPG tradition since the dawn of time. The game follows this routine for pretty much the entire game, but the plot arc is strong enough that you have motivation to go on and never tire of the dungeon-raiding and villager-questioning.

LEFT IN THE CHURCH

One of the most annoying things early on in the game is that if a party member dies, you have to go all the way back to a village, find a church, then talk to the priest to revive your fallen comrades. Same goes for saving; you can't do it on the world map or anywhere else – you have to find a church again. If everyone dies then, mercifully, it isn't game over. You do, however, lose half your gold, which stings. Later on in the game, you can store your lucre in a bank to avoid this, but it's still a pain in the chute. But as far as annoyances go that's about all we can think of. Sure, the random battles can get a bit frustrating when you're simply trying to explore, but that's to be expected, we suppose. And if it's *really* getting on your nerves, then you can buy some holy water and ward off the enemies for a few minutes.

And that's pretty much it. There are no superfluous features to list, nor should we spoil it all by spending a paragraph recounting the plot. Everything's just so... simple. Buy this (along with *Kingdom Hearts 2* and *Final Fantasy XII* when they come out) and you'll be floating on a cloud of joy. *Dragon Quest* makes most other RPGs look, well, a bit silly and pointless, really. But you have to understand that this review has been written from the point of view of massive RPG fans and as such it's blinded by an inexplicable love of levelling up and turn-based combat. If you're feverishly anti-role-playing, then the chances are you'll hate this. But in saying that, its innate simplicity makes it easy to play that it could be the perfect stepping stone for anyone wanting to convert. And you know what? It's better than almost every RPG on PS2. *Final Fantasy XII* had better be very special indeed if it's going to top this. **Andy Kelly**

■ *Dragon Quest is out on April 24th.*

"FINAL FANTASY XII HAD BETTER BE VERY SPECIAL INDEED IF IT'S GOING TO TOP THIS"

SHARP WIT: The hero is strong with both magic and physical attacks. He's an all-rounder.

PSM² VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Basic but sublimely playable RPG action. – Lots of wandering in the first few hours.	+ Gorgeous in absolutely every way. – No really. We mean it. Just sublime.	+ An absolutely stunning orchestral soundtrack. – Some irritating voices here and there.

LIFESPAN

If you want to see absolutely everything and finish every side-quest, expect to be playing for 100 hours or more..

MINUTES

IT'S BETTER THAN...
FINAL FANTASY X

IT'S WORSE THAN...
KINGDOM HEARTS 2

An absolutely massive game world, an amazing soundtrack, gorgeous visuals and some of the best RPG combat we've ever tussled with. Social life? What's that?

90

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Koei
Publisher: Koei
Players: 1-2
Memory Save: 134kb
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: No

PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer
"The only surviving wild breed of equine is found in Asia, and is called Prezwalski's Horse."

GAMEPIE
1% Finishing first.
97% Finishing last.
2% Going down the knackers' yard.

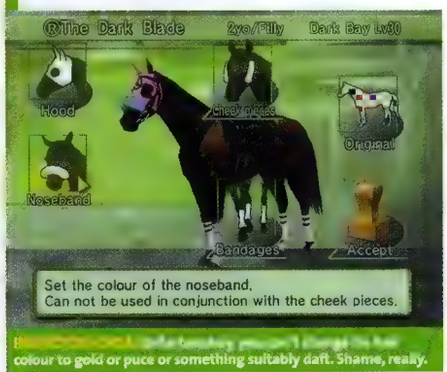
GAMEFAX
Management
RPG
Sports
Hard

TRIVBURST
- Comes with a clip-on thing to 'simulate reins'.
- It doesn't work though.
- Breed your own horse. Hold us back.
- Finish last every time.

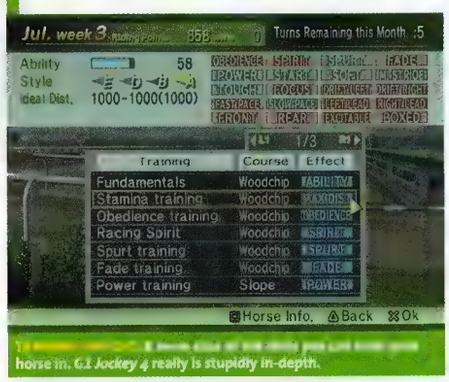
The MONEY $HOT
16th, eh? You're probably not going to do any better than that. *G1 Jockey 4* is harder than diamond-covered diamonds, it really is.

PIMP MY BRIDLE

After a few weeks of game time, you'll be handed your own hoss to train. Don't get too excited, now. Here you can see PSM2's own steed, The Dark Blade. Good name, eh? You can train every aspect of your horse, from his stamina to his sprinting to his ability to turn corners more smoothly. And, of course, you can dress him up in all sorts of horsey clobber. Well, face masks and leg bandages, anyway. Doesn't he look just absolutely *precious* in this pink outfit? He'll be the darling of the Milan catwalks before you know it.



colour to gold or puce or something suitably daft. Shame, really.



horse in. *G1 Jockey 4* really is stupidly in-depth.

"THE WHINNEY TAKES IT ALL"

G1 JOCKEY 4

It's *Gran Turismo* with nosebags! *Toca Racer Driver* with hooves! Whaddya mean, "that sounds rubbish"?

Long-time readers may recall our review of *G1 Jockey 3* (PSM2#34, 43%), which we panned. Forget that, we were harsh. Clean slate time. *G1 Jockey 4* is a *good game*. Yes, it's a horse-racing sim-cum-management game with RPGish bits and yes, Frankie Dettori is the only person in this country who might *possibly* be interested in it, but the fact remains that *G1 Jockey* is quite good fun. Though only quite.

You take charge of a rookie rider, fresh out of, erm, jockey school and it's your task to take him to the top of his game. You train horses, are given your own steed to customise and level up, wade through screens of stats detailing things like odds, horse strength, form, weather details and a billion others, keep an eye on how your rivals do and – eventually – take part in events yourself.

The very first thing you should do is throw the 'widget' controller thing that comes with the game in the bin. It clips to the top of the sticks, allowing you to (apparently) simulate using reins, but doesn't really work properly because while you're using it (and at top speed, you can't let go or you'll lose all momentum) you can't get at the buttons properly to whip your horse. And it tends to fall off when you get really enthusiastic. Our advice: switch to Control Type B, and rely on the D-pad and buttons. It's easier and way more precise.

LOSE CONTROL: Here's the special *G1 Jockey* controller in action. It's a bit flimsy and falls off a lot.

GLUE FACTORY

But don't think that when we say 'easier' we mean it's actually easy. *G1 Jockey 4* is *absolutely bloody rock*, requiring you to keep track of your horse's stamina, preferred racing position (leading all the way, pelting forward from the back at the last stretch, or hanging around the middle) and motivation (keep him well whipped, but not *too* well), and ensuring you don't knacker him out before the final straight, otherwise you'll see all the other riders gallop off into the distance while you break down in tears. It's the most absurdly tricky balancing act, and will probably be just too hardcore for some. Including, frankly, us – after two dozen races, we'd finished fifth once, sixth once, and in the bottom two every other time. Criminy.

So *G1 Jockey 4*... does it really matter what we say, ultimately? You're not going to buy it, are you, and nor is anybody you know. Unless you're mates with Frankie Dettori. But that doesn't stop it from being a pretty decent slab of entertainment that all fans of horse-racing management RPGs will love. Yep, just Frankie then. **David Cook**

■ *G1 Jockey 4 is out now.*

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ It's PS2's best ever horse-racing management sim!
– It's still a horse-racing management sim.

GRAPHICS
+ Yep, they're horses. 'Neigh' doubt about it.
– Hardly pushing PS2 to its very limits.

SOUND
+ There's the sounds of hooves, yes.
– And Satan's own brand of menu music.

LIFESPAN
Well, if you're mad into the subject, this has more depth than all the world's oceans stacked on top of each other.
MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
G1 JOCKEY 3

IT'S WORSE THAN...
GRAN TURISMO 4

Staggeringly in-depth and reasonably good fun, *G1 Jockey 4* certainly has merit. But it's got such niche appeal, we can't imagine many would actually buy it.

65

PlayStation®2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK

You are cordially invited to the world exclusive unveiling of

TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND

Review and Playable Demo

Only in Official PlayStation 2 Magazine

ALSO

RAINBOW SIX DOES VEGAS
COUNTER-TERRORISM'S FINEST 'GO LOUD' ON PS3

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THE DA VINCI CODE CRACKED
WE INVESTIGATE THE GOD-BOTHERING BLOCKBUSTER

PLAYABLE ON THE DISC

TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND
FIFA STREET 2
FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3
DRAGON QUEST
MARC ECKO'S GETTING UP
...AND MORE

ON SALE 23 MARCH

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Konami
Publisher: Konami
Players: 1-2
Memory Save: 238KB
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: No

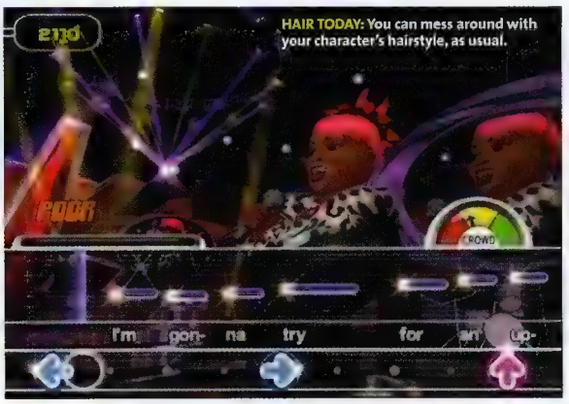
PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer
"You can break a glass by sustaining a note matching its frequency long enough for the note to overcome the elasticity of the structure."

GAMEPIE
15% Putting your head on a girl's body.
50% Singing like a nightclub crooner.
10% Awful minigames.
25% Hitting the notes.

GAMEFAX
Karaoke
Dancing
Stupid
Multi-player

TRIVBURST
- Sing duets with a golden-voiced friend.
- Play minigames with your voice.
- Dance yourself stupid while you warble.

The MON£Y $HOT
Keep your eye on the crowd gauge – if you sing too many bum notes then your audience will jeer you off the stage. You don't want that.
CROWD
Uh oh



PSM2 BRONZE AWARD

DIVING YOU ROUND THE BEND

The two mini-games available here are really awful. This is the best – really – involving you singing into the mic at the right time in order to make stagedrivers hurl themselves farther into the crowd. Crap as you like.

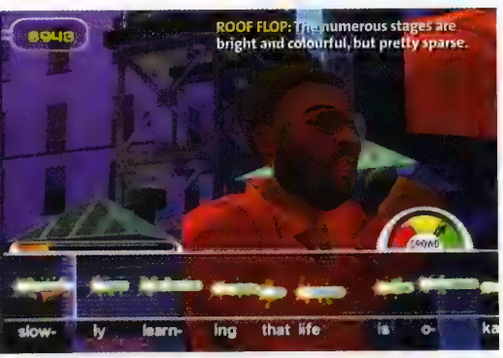
"WIN WHEN YOU'RE SINGING"

KARAOKE STAGE 2

Do you love *SingStar*? Yeah? Great! Keep playing it then, it's loads better than this.

There are only two things you ever really need to know about a new karaoke game – firstly, what are the songs like? And secondly, is it better than *Singstar*? Sadly for *Karaoke Stage 2*, the answers are a) uninspired and b) nowhere near.

Admittedly, *Karaoke Stage 2* does have some good features. You can now sing duets with a mate by using a second headset, create a nicely detailed character of your own, or even use an EyeToy to put your own face in the game (see Bend-A-Gender). Or you can plug in a *Dancing Stage* dance mat and lay down the moves while you sing the grooves. But it's not really enough to turn this X-Factor wannabe into a chart-topper.



Counting up the songs might sound impressive – there are 50 to learn, in both short and long versions. Still, none of them are actually sung by the real artists. This wasn't a problem in *Guitar Hero*, which boasted some brilliant cover versions, but in *Karaoke Stage 2* most of the re-recorded tracks sound hollow and cheap. There are a handful of singalong favourites, including *Take On Me*, *Everybody Wants To Rule The World* and *Crazy In Love*, and picking the ultra-high *Endless Love* is always good for a laugh. But the majority of tracks you won't recognise, or just won't be interested in – which is a schoolboy error for any karaoke game.

KARAOKE RAGE

When it comes to turning in your performance you're given a choice of locations, which are cheerful and bright, but look like something from the CBeebies channel. Words and pitch-bars (to show you how well you're singing the song) are relegated to the very bottom of the screen, and look ugly and squashed. It's not unfair to say that *SingStar*'s clean and easy-to-grasp design makes *Karaoke Stage 2*'s sometimes clunky and imprecise singing-system look amateurish in comparison. It's actually hard to read the words. They scroll along in a blur, and any song you don't know well will quickly degenerate into a meaningless drone.

The sad thing is that *Karaoke Stage 2* isn't a terrible game. There are lots of gameplay options, a neat medley mode and some minigames – well, *two* minigames – though the latter are prime examples of what we like to call 'complete bollocks', being a ludicrous stagediving game and a Pong clone with the bats moved via the pitch of your voice. Jeez. So they add nothing to the game, which means that – as you've probably guessed – this just isn't as good as *SingStar*. **Ben Richardson**

■ **Karaoke Stage 2 *is out now.***

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Plenty of options for singing sessions. – Only two players can sing at the same time.	+ Building your own character adds variety. – Overall, it looks pretty amateurish and dull.	+ Lots and lots of songs to choose from. – None of the songs are sung by the real artists.

LIFESPAN
Lots to sing, unlock and select, with a decent medley mode, and it'll take you a while to crack the sing 'n' dance combo challenge.
MINUTES ... YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
KARAOKE STAGE

IT'S WORSE THAN...
ANY SINGSTAR

Enjoyable, but the basic appearance, limited multiplayer and some tedious tracks means *Karaoke Stage 2* will always play second fiddle to *SingStar*'s success.

73

DETAILS
Developer: Eurocom
Publisher: VU Games
Players: 1
Memory Save: 89KB
Widescreen: Yes
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: Yes

PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer
"The director of Ice Age 1 & 2, Chris Wedge, is the voice of the bushy tailed nut-muncher Scrat."

GAMEPIE
40% Scrambling around for acorns.
10% Pirouettes with a Polar bear.
20% Throwing rocks.
30% Being farted on by a bear.

GAMEFAX
Platformer | Film Tie in | For Kiddies | On Rails

TRIVBURST
- Swim, climb and batter beavers as Scrat.
- Voice talent provided by Ray Romano, Denis Leary and Sean William Scott.
- Cut-scenes lifted straight from the film.

The MONEY SHOT
The visuals look impressive and we can't help but smile when Scrat struggles to compose his stance on a slippery surface.

GAMES FOR A LAUGH

In-between all the nut-collecting are a selection of minigames to break from the norm, and thankfully they're frequent enough to keep things fresh. Indeed, there's a few standout moments here. Each one is different to the last – one minute you're sliding down a slope, hitting a ramp and using Bemani skills to perform gymnastics and the next you're having a bear fart in your face. To help you reach higher platforms. Obviously. You can even lob rocks at monkeys. It certainly beats chucking them at tramps, eh? All in all the minigames lighten up an occasionally drab experience.

"ICE WORK **IF YOU CAN GET IT**"

ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN

Finally! We haven't played a game about grabbing your nuts since *Leisure Suit Larry*...

The developers have made a curious decision in using Scrat as their lead character. If truth be told we'd rather play as the woolly mammoth, the sabre-tooth tiger or... um... the other one. Surprisingly, however, the little fella turns out to be a great unsung hero as he digs, squeezes and scrambles his way through the prehistoric surroundings. He can even biff up giant bears with his tail. Brilliant.

Ice Age 2 isn't exactly your run of the mill movie-to-game affair. Drawn-out plods across familiar terrains are substituted for a mixture of minigames, platforming sections and scavenging for nuts, so you're never doing the same thing for long. Our tiny hero has a range of skills too – he can scale walls, swim rivers and although not technically a 'skill' per-se, he looks hilarious as he struggles for grip on icy surfaces. Like David Seaman in Dancing on Ice.

As you bounce your way around the vast landscapes – ranging from frozen glaciers to vibrant forest areas – you'll come across a frozen tundra-load of characters in need of help. Whether you're collecting apples from trees or placing baby vultures back into their mother's nest; you'll be doing the lot. At times, though, *Ice Age 2* feels fairly empty. In between the minigames there's a whole lot of wandering around looking for special gold nuts, which gets tedious quickly.

IT'S A GAS

While *Ice Age 2* isn't exactly firing on cylinders of originality, there's a great deal of humour – like the bit where the gang come running because they think they hear a mammoth but it turns out to be a bear farting. And even the way that Scrat bounces around will bring a smile to your face.

This is definitely for the kids, but that doesn't mean adults won't appreciate its looks and charm. *Ice Age 2* might not be worth 30 notes for you but it's worth buying for a young 'un – then playing it when they're in bed. **Nathan Irvine**

Ice Age 2 is thawing out in stores right now.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Rammed with variety... – ...apart from the monotonous collecting of nuts. Of course.	+ Beautiful character animations. – The wonky camera can hinder you in places.	+ Voice acting from the movie's stars. – Feels a bit quiet and lifeless at times

LIFESPAN
There are loads of bonus features to unlock, but anyone over the age of twelve will complete this in hours and never come back to it.
MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
IT'S WORSE THAN...
THE INCREDIBLES

At times *Ice Age 2* feels a tad lacklustre and it isn't going to entertain you for weeks, but there's enough here to make this a decent enough present for the kids.

68

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Pipeworks
Publisher: Midway
Players: 1–2
Memory Save: 244KB
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: No

PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer
"*Rampage* is 20 years old. Almost every home console from Atari 2600 to PS2 has had a slice of the *Rampage* pie in the last two decades."

GAMEPIE
92% Pummelling buildings
2% Flinging vehicles through the air
4% Eating mime artists
2% Swatting choppers out of the sky

GAMEFAX
Old-skool
Violent
Budget
Shit

TRIVBURST
- Destroy towns and cities with over 25 monsters.
- 3D environments allow you to explore alleys and side-streets. Wow.
- Full co-op mode.

RAM RAID: You can jump on top of the buildings to weaken their rooftops.

The MON£Y $HOT
Systematically taking out an entire tower block – after carefully weakening it – rewards you with a super-combo and a whole lot of rubble.

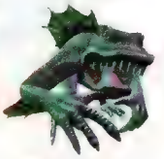
MONSTERS INC

Here's a selection of the 25 'hilariously'-named (we'd call them 'Funny Monsters' if that were accurate) that you'll be able to play as throughout *Rampage: Total Destruction*.

Cal the Squid

Crock the Crocodile

George the Ape


Gilman the Blowfish

Icky the Echidna

Leon the Lion

Lizzie the Dinosaur

Marco the Shark

Ralph the Wolf

Ramsey the, well, guess...

Rhett the Rat

Rojo the Bull

Wally the Warthog

"TOTAL DESTRUCTION? MORE LIKE TOTAL ARSE"

RAMPAGE: TOTAL DESTRUCTION

The huge, slavering beasts are back with their very literal idea of 'hitting the town'.

Almost unbelievably, this old-school smash-'em-up has been around for 20 destruction filled years – which isn't bad for a series that's as linear as length of string. But to celebrate its birthday, *Rampage Total Destruction* has put on all its latest accessories and cleaned up its act in a bid to woo us into thinking there's something original and fresh to get to grips with here. But there isn't. In fact, it's never felt older and duller.

Although *Rampage Total Destruction* now sees you battling end-of-level bosses – like the pathetic hovercraft that fires bubbles at you – and a Rage Meter that enables you lash down buildings a bit quicker, everything else is pretty much the same as it ever was. You wander around small sections of cities, bash up buildings like a beast-shaped wrecking ball and eat the odd person – just for good measure. OK, so the visuals are now in 3D, but don't let this fool you into believing the action is free-roaming – it just means that it's trickier to leap from building to building. There's a lame attempt at spicing up the action by adding key objectives, like scoffing down five Hell's Angels for a points bonus or a special move (charge punch, spinning attack and the like), but you've still got to inch into position to take out set-pieces of tower blocks and you've still got to slap choppers out of the air – although an all-new roar attack (L2 when unlocked) can help you out here. And its humour, a staple throughout its 20 year existence, is as funny as Joe Pasquale reading knock-knock jokes while popping your plums in a vice.

THEATRE OF WRECKED DREAMS: Pull down the billboards before you level these buildings.

BEAST INFECTION

The slight consolation of *Rampage Total Destruction* is that it's designed to be played in short bursts, meaning that you can kill a few minutes of play without testing your desire to complete each level in full. There's a sense of satisfaction when you feel the impact of a block-rocking power punch and some of the new beasts, while unable to add anything unique to proceedings, add a different perspective to the demolition. But for all its spit 'n' polish, *Rampage: Total Destruction* feels like a game that ran out of breath years ago. The format is tired and, barring a complete destructible world to freely roam around and a decent mission structure, we can't see it hitting 21. It's about time the house was brought down on top of it. **Nathan Irvine**

■ Rampage *is smashing up stores right now.*

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Non-stop wrecking 'fun'. – Can't be bothered to smash any more? Tough. That's all there is to it.	+ The huge beast are nicely animated... – ...but everything else looks cheap and nasty.	+ Plenty of commentary and monster roars... – ... but the 'humour' is as desperate as Paul Danan.

LIFESPAN
The single-player mode is the epitome of tedium but you can liven the experience up if you drag a mate into the monster mash-up.
MINUTES

IT'S BETTER THAN...
MONSTERS, INC

IT'S WORSE THAN...
WAR OF THE MONSTERS

It's fun for a while, but the lame objectives and lack of power-ups soon make this a chore. It's about time this franchise was buried under some rubble.

47

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Softmax
Publisher: 505 Game Street
Players: 1
Memory Save: 287kb
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: No

GAMEFAX
RPG · Goblins · Hard · PS2 Exclusive

DINO-SORE: The baddies in *Magna Carta* are certainly varied...

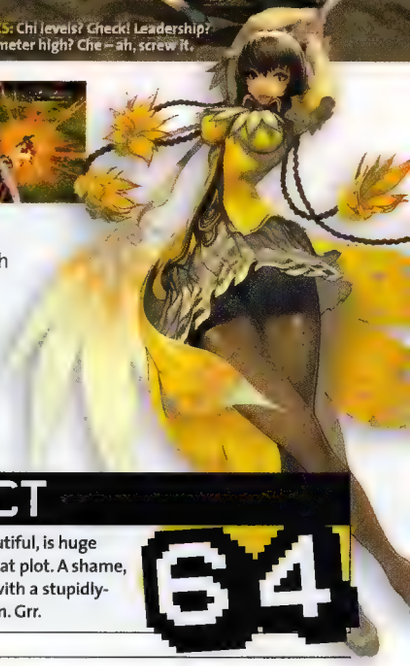
LADY? BOY? That one with the white hair? That's you. Believe it or not, he's a man. No, *seriously*.

TOO MANY COOKS: Chi levels? Check! Leadership? Check! Initiative meter high? Che – ah, screw it.

"GET CARTA? PROBABLY NOT"

MAGNA CARTA

You know how there've been swathes of great RPGs recently? They look good, don't they?



Let's talk you through *Magna Carta*'s madly-complex battle system. Step one: you're attacked. But just *how* were you attacked? Were you walking über-slowly in 'detect' mode? Or running in 'dash' mode? Then you're the victim of a 'surprise attack', chummy, meaning the enemy will get in the first two blows – and there's nowt you can do about it.

Step two: attacking. Both you and the enemy have 'initiative meters'. The one whose bar rises fastest can land the next blow. Hurrah! It's you! Hit him, qui – no, wait. Which of your three characters do you want to use? Picked one? Now, go for it – oh, have you selected a fighting style? It's not letting you pick the best one? Ah, each requires the area to be infused with the right magical 'chi'. Still – get him... oh, too late. His meter hit max as you fannied about and he's battered you to death.

But when you strike, it's satisfying – it's all about Bemani button-bashing, and the more accurate you can be, the harder the blow. But you'll just get bogged down in the maddening mechanics. As well as chi and initiative, you've also got to worry about your leadership levels, the 'Trinity Drive', (which enhances attacks) and a score of other stuff. The rest? It looks stylish, has a great storyline with interesting (if badly-acted) characters, has lots to explore... but with battles every couple of minutes, *Magna Carta* is left lamer than the most crippled of ducks. **David Cook**

■ *Magna Carta* is out now.

PSM2 VERDICT

Magna Carta looks beautiful, is huge and has a genuinely great plot. A shame, then, that it's hobbled with a stupidly-complex fighting system. Grr.

64

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Avalanche
Publisher: THQ
Players: 1 – 2
Memory Save: 68kb
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: No

GAMEFAX
Platformer · For Kiddies · Easy · Sequel

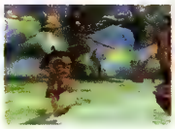
"TAK IT OUTSIDE, MATE"

SENILE DEMENSION: Seeing as the game takes place in 'another dimension', there could've been a lot more variety in scenery.

IF I HAD A HAMMER... OH, I DO: Lok uses his special hammer attack to take out a big stone insect thing.

TAK: THE GREAT JUJU CHALLENGE

It's not great and it's no challenge, but it's certainly, er, juju. Wait, can we start again?



TAK A LOK AROUND: Tak and Lok can now combine their skills.

When PS2 platformers are discussed – boy, are our dinner parties *exciting* – the *Tak* games tend to get overlooked in favour of PS2 legends like *Ratchet* and *Jak*, newcomers like *Psychonauts*, or evil hate figure Crash Bandicoot. This is because Tak's adventures are *nice*. They're *pleasant*. And they're completely unmemorable. *Tak* is beige, *Tak* is quiche, *Tak* is the OK-but-forgettable boy at school you only ever spoke to when you needed someone to lend you a pencil sharpener.

Which, of course, doesn't make it bad – it's perfectly serviceable fun, seeing Tak and his comedy sidekick Lok engaged in some sort of other-dimensional game show on behest of the Juju goddess, which involves them doing, well, exactly the same things they always do – jumping around jungle-style landscapes, smacking nasties around the head and solving simple puzzles. Except! This time, the two co-operate to overcome obstacles, so that Lok might lift Tak up to ledges he can't reach, for instance, or – keep calm, everyone, the revolution's here – Tak might stand on a floor panel to open a door for Lok to scamper through. The character you're not in control of, by the way, will scamper on behind you – apart from the times when he doesn't. The AI, while generally good, can be a bit screwy sometimes. Like when the two collided mid-jump and plummeted down a whacking great chasm. How we laughed.

The Great Juju Challenge, then. You'll play it for a bit, you'll quite enjoy it, and then – aside from the bit when you pick up a baby rhino and it squeals tearfully, making you feel guilty – you'll forget it. But if you're after memories of a crying baby rhino, you could just visit the zoo with an air rifle. **David Cook**

■ The Great Juju Challenge *is out now.*

PSM2 VERDICT

Incidentally, we don't advocate the shooting of rhinos. So, this new *Tak* – better than *Crash*, worse than *Tak 2*, and forgettable in almost every aspect.

66

DETAILS
Developer: In-house
Publisher: Koei
Players: 1-2
Memory Save: 232kb
Widescreen: No
50-60Hz: No
Surround Sound: No

PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer
"There have been well over 20 games based around the *Dynasty Warriors* universe, for some reason, stretching back to the NES era."

GAMEPIE
40% Stabbing
30% Slashing
20% Cutting
10% Piercing

GAMEFAN
Action
Sequel
War
Hard

TRIVBURST
- Over 40 characters to play as.
- 18 brand new missions based on real events.
- Create your own character. Woo.

The MON£Y $HOT
There are moments among the tedium where you take out scores of men with a single attack, which is pretty satisfying all in all.

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Can you match these near-identical screenshots of different *DW* games to the relevant box art? If so, why?

Ze answers: 1)e 2)c 3)b 4) 5)d. Got that right, did you? Yeah, right.

"WE JUST EXPERIENCED DEJA VU"

DYNASTY WARRIORS 5 XTREME LEGENDS

Surely there've been enough of these games to make a dynasty by now? It's getting ridiculous.

There've been roughly eight and a half thousand *Dynasty Warriors* games released on PS2 and, to be perfectly honest, we're bored to death of it. Just *thinking* about the archaic gameplay and outmoded visuals makes us upset. We're holding back the tears as we type this, wondering how in the Hell we're going to review yet *another* historical slash-'em-up without repeating ourselves. What can we say that hasn't been said already?

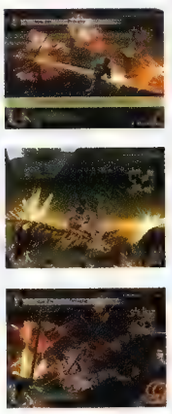
Well, we could tell you about the new game modes. In Destiny mode you can create your own character. It's nowhere as near as flexible as the likes of *Smackdown! Vs Raw*, but it does the job. You can choose from 10 faces, 10 hairstyles and adjust your height/weight and weapon discipline, be it spear, sword or staff. You then take your character through a story, working your way up from lowly henchman to full-on dynasty warrior. The worst thing about this is how weak your character is at the start – racking up kills is difficult and battles go on forever. Other features let you switch your allegience to another army and buy items to upgrade your character.

Guard
Cao Cao "So, Zhang Lu, you choose to side with your enemy..."
FLASH BANG: Some of the lighting is quite impressive. But it's still terminally dull regardless. Bummer.

MODE THE MERRIER

Xtreme mode, on the other hand, is more traditional. You take charge of a group of officers and must control not only the battlefield, but also the economy. And in Legend mode you play through 18 missions based on real historical events from Chinese history. Depending on which character you play as, you see events unfold from their particular point of view. You can even play as both the villain and the hero, which is quite interesting until you get tired of the tedious, repetitive combat. Which doesn't take that long, what with this being a *Dynasty Warriors* game. The 'wizard' characters especially are a bit rubbish – their musou attacks are impossible to aim, specifically the laser beams. No, we don't remember the chapter of Chinese history with laser beams either.

And... er, that's it. We've pretty much covered everything. Have you played *Dynasty Warriors 4* or 5? Then ignore this entirely. And expect another review of another *Dynasty Warriors* spin-off very soon. Maybe we'll just copy and paste this review and change the game name. [Joke]. **Andy Kelly**



PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ Can be fun in five minute bursts.
– Essentially tired stuff ready for the scrapheap.

GRAPHICS
+ Interesting character design.
– Muddy and dated battlefield visuals.

SOUND
+ Unintentionally hilarious voice acting.
– Awful rock music makes us want to weep.

LIFESPAN
It's big, but whether or not it will hold your attention for more than a few hours remains to be seen.
MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
HE-MAN

IT'S WORSE THAN...
DYNASTY WARRIORS 4

A hilarious waste of time. A few *Xtreme Legends* updates here and there was bearable, but one for every version of the game is just too much.

45

all games and interactive entertainment carry an age rating

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The MON£Y $HOT
See the Precursor Orbs floating behind Daxter? Going back to collect all of these after the end is where the replay value's at. It's a must for die-hard fans.

DAX ON, DAX OFF: Thankfully Dax's wisecracks are at a minimum. For the most part, he's just the right side of silent.

DAXTER

Small, perfectly formed and better than Jak's been for ages. This furball sure ain't no (ott)sell out.

PSM2 SILVER AWARD

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Ready At Dawn
Publisher: SCEE
Players: 1 – 4
Memory Save: 112kb

GAMEFAX
Sequel | Old School | Funny | Network Play

TRIVBURST
- Pilot an air bike called 'Old Betsie'.
- Hunt bugs with electro fly swats, gas guns and flame-throwers.
- Go head to head in Jak Combat Racing mode.
- Get involved with 'hilarious' bemani mini games.

PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.
"Max Casella, the man behind the grating vocals of Daxter, was also the first actor to play Timor in the Broadway version of The Lion King. Talk about typecasting..."

Ages ago we said that the perfect platformer pairing on PS2 should have been Jak and Clank. The strong silent type and mechanical gentleman's gentleman, while not being anywhere near perfect, would have at least ensured the sidelining of, well... Daxter.

In the original game it took all of about two pratfalls from height – and the subsequent sight of the grinning, begoggled ottsel gloating over your still chilling corpse – to make you despise the little frikker.

Oh, how we've now had to book a table at the humble pie eatery, and order the 'Our Words Crumble' from the specials board. *Daxter*, is good. Real good, and actually funny too.

The action kicks off as Jak is thrown into prison at the start of *Jak 2* – a stroke of genius in its own right as it means that developers Ready At Dawn have used the strongest game of the series as a creative launch pad. Things then take a weird twist, as the ginger one decides that the best way he can spring his mate from prison is to get a job as a bug hunter for the Critter Ridder Company. (Let's not forget that, at this point, Jak's looking forward to two whole years of dark torture. Mates, eh?) Regardless of Daxter's self interest and the spurious motives to get the plot rolling, love still comes quickly as, about two levels in, you suddenly realise this is the best platformer on PSP bar none.

So, what is it that boosts *Daxter* way above the practically non-existent competition?

"SO MUCH LIKE JAK 2 IT'S A BIT UNNERVING, BUT DAXTER'S THE BEST PLATFORMER ON PSP BAR NONE"

Well, it's the fact that this looks and plays so much like *Jak 2*, it's sometimes a bit unnerving.

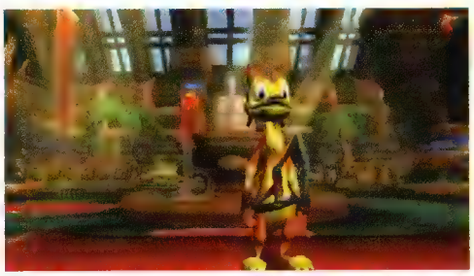
Instead of a Zoomer, Daxter gets a hovering Lambretta. Instead of Lurkers, he's up against a host of jewel-skulled bugs. And, instead of Samos the Green Sage, it's Osmo – owner of the bug-hunting emporium – that dishes out the missions.

The hub world of Haven City is also the same futuristic cityscape of *Jak 2* – complete with queues of flying cars and 'airlocks' that lead to spacious mission levels. Enter any of these and you'll find yourself transported to colourful, multi-themed side worlds packed with stuff to bounce off. The only real pang of disappointment comes with the realisation that this game isn't, and can't be, as big as its older sibling. But it's a regret that's tempered by a new-found drive to explore. *Daxter* plays so smoothly you completely forget you're using a handheld, and start to expect it to deliver on a scale that you've previously experienced at home. So, when you do finally realise that the action *is* a lot more linear, and that the levels just aren't going

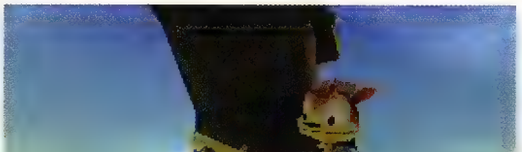
WEASELY DOES IT: Stealth mode allows you to sneak up on enemies and crawl under barriers.

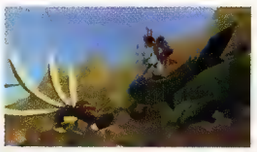
OTTSEL OF THE CENTURY

You think you've got Daxter sussed? You think all there is to him is a bag of wisecracks and a pair of goggles that rarely get worn? Well, think again. Anyone who's finished *Jak 3* will know that ol' Daxter boy is, in fact, a member of The Precursors. No, not the speccy Scottish harmony duo, but an ancient race who built all the inventions in the series. Doesn't make him any less of an arsewipe, mind.

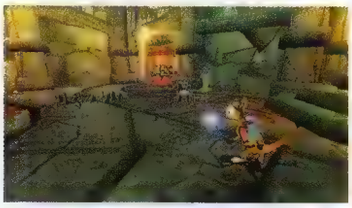


OLD AS ICE: Ottsels created an empire full of arcane technology. Yes.





LAMBRETTA THE DEVIL YOU KNOW: The scooter isn't really needed at the start of the game such is the size of the play area.



JET'S GET PHYSICAL: The bug repellent doubles up as a hovering jet device. Fly it over a naked flame and you're instantly running on rocket fuel.

to be as populated, you can't help but feel the respect become tinged with a little sadness.

BUG OFF

That said, whether it's sliding down pipes, dishing out healthy green eco like a crop duster or scaling the climbable walls, *Daxter* still delivers on all fronts with equal confidence. Even the infuriating bemani minigames make a return, and while they do radically slow the pace of the game down, the variety they add to proceedings is more than welcome.

One big departure for the series is the collection of battle bugs. This minigame – unlike the more familiar Jak Combat Racing – revolves around the location of insects and potions within the story mode. Collect enough of these critters and you can vary your battle tactics in the semi-Digimon turn-based combat. Set the right type of creature against an enemy, then tailor your chemical upgrades correctly and you'll soon have a cockroach-tough bug with pincers like wheel clamps. You could easily dismiss this as just another gimmick that enhances replay, but take it into the context of the wireless battle arena and we're talking an attention to detail that stretches to all elements of *Daxter*'s gameplay.

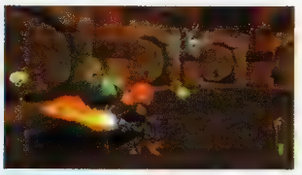
In fact, if there was just one reason to convince you that this is a 'must have' PSP title, it'd be *Daxter*'s ability to keep on giving on so many levels. We really shouldn't be surprised, though, as its something just about every title in the series has done previously. But, here, in the palm of your hand, it becomes one of those wonderful – and equally frightening – guzzlers of time. What? I've missed my stop? Again? What? We're already at Kuala Lumpur? Whaddya mean I haven't turned my PS2 on for a week? Or been to the toilet? It's this kind of all-out involvement that only the best games can muster, and *Daxter* is most definitely one of those. Do yourself a favour. Go get. **Greg Kendle**

■ Daxter is out on April 14th.

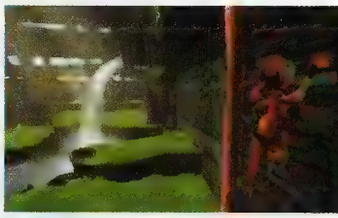
TUNNEL VISION: Most levels explore the depths of Haven City, but you do get to sniff fresh air.

TAUGHT BY THE FUZZ

Daxter, in his own words, will now run us through his repertoire on PSP. "What? Jak? Nah, he's fine. Fine, I tells ya. OK I hear there's some lay-deez out there that wanna see what an Ottsel can *really* do. So stand back – behind the white line madam – and lemme walk you through the old one-two. What? Whoa-dere... Do not mess with the fur kid. I SAID, DO NOT MESS WIT' THE FUR KID..." <Hey, at least be thankful that the monkey/parrot thing's no longer in there, you wouldn't want our impressions of that...>



GAS DESTRUCTION: **"That's my flame-thrower. Light it on a nay-kid flame... voila."**



SCALE OF A TIME: **"Not only can I climb, but I can also jump onto other climbable bits."**

SMASH DECISION: **"Howja like my electro-swat? It's grrrreat at smooshing bugs."**

...OR FLY TRYING: **"This big mutha is just like the fly Lurkers Jak used to chase."**

PSM VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Bucket loads of quality platforming. – There's a bit too much falling to your doom.	+ The dragonfly boss bug's animation is a revelation. – The camera default reset is a touch sluggish	+ Unobtrusive but catchy background tunes... – ... That come with loads of random loading.

LIFESPAN

Plenty to get involved with, but the first half of the game rattles by due to being too easy. Finish it quick and get networking...

MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
KAO CHALLENGERS

IT'S WORSE THAN...
JAK 2 ON PS2

A brilliant piece of crafted platforming that has the power to draw you in for an age. While not perfect, it's now the game by which all other PSP titles of its ilk will be judged.

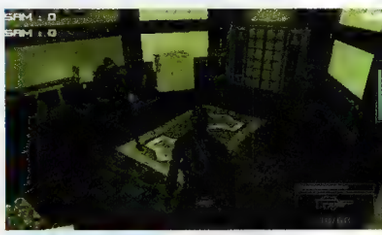
86

The MON£¥ $HOT
You'll hardly ever see the game this bright. On the odd occasion it does happen, you'll then be killed almost instantly. But still, eh? Never mind.

PSM2 BRONZE AWARD

SPY VS SPY

Yes, there's a Wi-Fi mode, but it can't quite match the sheer majesty of *Splinter Cell*'s usual multi-player affray – the Spies Vs Mercs missions. Instead of two-on-two action pitting heavily armed grunts against agile chaps in rubber suits, it's simply spy-on-spy action beamed across two PSPs. The control system doesn't do it any favours at all, though – and the lack of a mic for whispering sweet nothings in men's ears as you've got them by the throat is particularly galling. Never mind, eh? It's all quite fun, but no great shakes.



WHO AT ALL THE SPIES? Just finding each other in the darkness is an achievement.

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Ubisoft
Publisher: Ubisoft
Players: 1–2
Memory Save: 212kb

GAMEFAX
Sequel
Hard
Violent
Action

TRIVBURST
- Levels from *Chaos Theory*, *Pandora Tomorrow* and the original *Splinter Cell*.
- All the gadgets from the previous games.
- Revamped controls.

PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.
"Whatever you say about realism in books, Clancy's never even been in the army – he ran his own insurance company."

SPLINTER CELL ESSENTIALS

Sam Fisher takes a trip down memory lane – and snaps a few necks as well.

Reading War And Peace in six-point type. Watching Star Wars on a black and white portable. Listening to Maximo Park via a tin can tied to a bit of string stretched across a rugby pitch. What have these things got in common? That's right – they're *sort* of still worthwhile, but let down by technology that doesn't really suit them. And what's that got to do with *Splinter Cell* on PSP? Well, if you haven't worked that out yet, you probably wouldn't make it into the NSA anyway, genius.

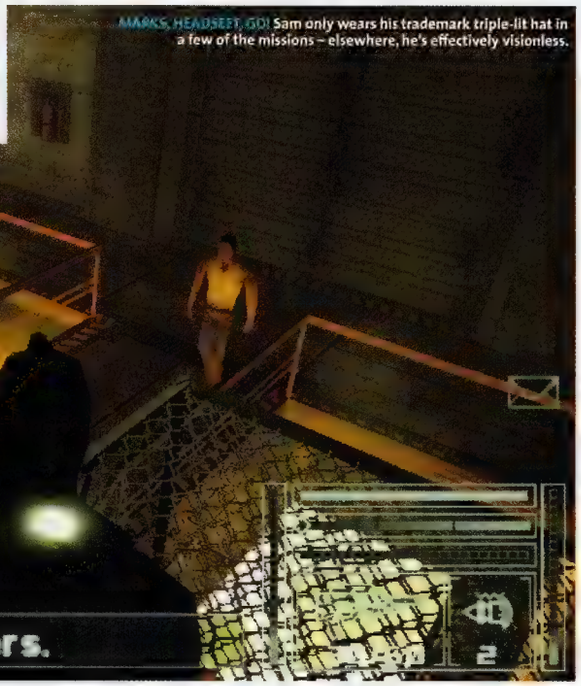
Essentials, as you can probably guess from the title, is a sort of *Best Of Splinter Cell*, featuring levels from all three previous games, chunks from the forthcoming *Double Agent* and levels from Sam's Navy Seal past, all presented as flashbacks. Things kick off with Sam sneaking in to visit his dead daughter's grave in 2009, as it turns out that he's been framed following his time with the terrorists – which, confusingly, you won't have played yet. It's got most of the basic moves introduced up until the third game – the half-split's there, for instance, but the upside-down-neck snap isn't – and nearly all of the kit. This means that certain levels have been tweaked slightly – the first two games, for instance, didn't let Sam stab people from the front, so some of the guards' movement patterns have been tweaked to compensate for his new abilities – while others have been toned down. The oil rig level from the original, for example, no longer takes place in daylight – presumably because PSP just can't

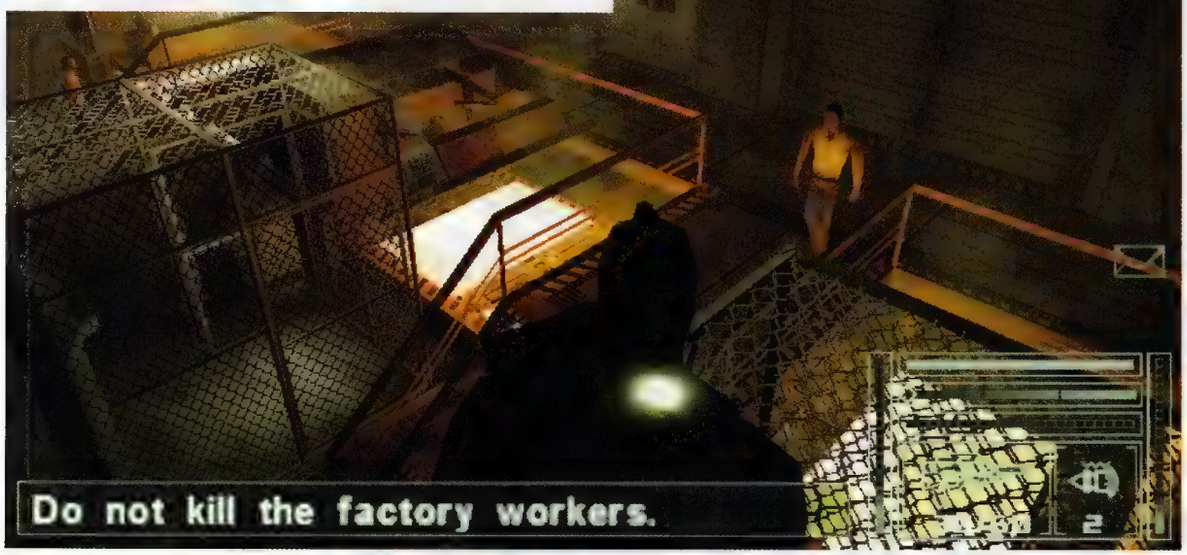
SNEAKY PEAKY: Careful perusal of the noise bar is a necessity in these situations.

IT'S A FAIR DROP: Guards are still chronically unwilling to look at the ceiling. Idiots..

BRAIN DAMAGE: How to deal with men who wear vests in public – drive their nosebones into their brains.

TROLLEY DOLLY: 'Shhh! I'm hiding!' Sam ruins another prison break by carelessly trying to befriend a hapless canteen worker.


MARKS, HEADSET, GO! Sam only wears his trademark triple-lit hat in a few of the missions – elsewhere, he's effectively visionless.

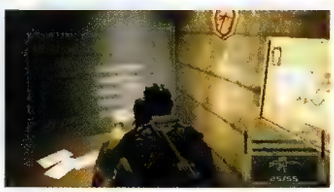


TECHING IT EASY

Unlike most near-pensioners, Sam's always kept up with technology, and usually creeps around with the sort of kit usually reserved for paparazzi photographers. Here he's got the foil-o-gun – a non-lethal alternative to ventilating people with a sniper rifle – as well as the under-the-door cam and all his trademark vision modes. One slightly odd decision is that his night-vision's green – rather than the white seen in the earlier games – which can make things a bit tricky to see sometimes.

MINE, ALL MINE: Clicking the mines with no rumble feedback gets a bit tedious.

SHOT IN THE DARK: And precision sniping's an absolute arse when the men are so tiny.



LIGHTBULB SHORTAGE: The whole game is played out with an overly-emo darkness about it.

handle the effects. Other than that, though (and, OK, the odd moment where you end up looking through the back of Sam's head because of camera angle trouble) handheld *Splinter Cell* looks almost as good as the original.

PITCH BLACK

It's a bit dark, though. *Really* dark, in fact. And that's playing it on treble-brightness, super-battery-drain-o-mode, in a room with the curtains shut. On levels where Sam doesn't have his trademark night vision, or in a car with sun coming through the windows, it's virtually impossible to see *anything* – instead, you're reduced to scrabbling around in the dark waiting for an Open Door prompt to appear, hoping you're not about to stumble off a cliff. Despite the massive PSP screen, the effect's claustrophobic, and squinting to make out tiny guards in the distance can be genuinely unpleasant.

More trouble comes in the shape of PSP's analogue nub. Because *Splinter Cell* usually makes full use of the right analogue stick and every single button on the DualShock, the control system's stretched a bit thin with the handheld's sparse control setup. Most importantly, while you strafe and run as normal, shifting the viewpoint's done by holding ◎ as you prod the nub – meaning you can't move and look around at the same time, which slows things down a bit. Other controls are doubled up, which causes its own problems – for instance, the 'Zoom Out' and 'Whistle' commands are mapped to the same button, so if you put away your scope too quickly there's every chance of deliberately alerting every guard in the area to your presence. You'll get used to all this, but it can still be a bit annoying. Other niggles include guards still shooting you as you're stabbing them in the kidneys, as well as the lack of any rumbly DualShock feedback and some massive loading times (irritating, because you'll want to save the game an awful lot)

Splinter Cell's still an excellent game, and this is as flawless as a conversion as you could really hope for, with new levels that are genuinely well designed, but it's hampered by a control system and format that doesn't suit it. For our money, stealth games are best played on a huge TV with a joypad in one hand so you can sip tea with the other while you're waiting for guards to saunter by. Sneaky pausey games just aren't frenetic enough for handheld action. **Joel Snape**

■ Splinter Cell Essentials *is out now.*

"IT'S REALLY, REALLY DARK. SOMETIMES IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO SEE ANYTHING AT ALL"

PSM VERDICT

GAMEPLAY	GRAPHICS	SOUND
+ Stabbing men in the lungs never gets tiring. – Controlling it via a tiny nub isn't much fun at all.	+ It really is *Splinter Cell*, in miniature... – And darker than naptime at Marilyn Manson's house.	+ It's got proper voices and everything! Astonishing. – Do all the guards *have* to do the same whistle?

LIFESPAN
Nine hours of creeping around in the dark, plus a bit more creeping around killing other people in multi-player mode.
MINUTES — YEARS

IT'S BETTER THAN...
GHOST IN THE SHELL

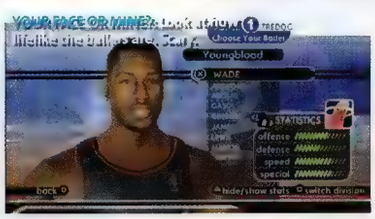
IT'S WORSE THAN...
METAL GEAR ACID 2

An object lesson in why certain games probably shouldn't make the transition to PSP – wait for *Double Agent* on PS2 instead and enjoy the 'Cell experience in all its intended glory.

72

TAKE ON ME: All that stands in your way to the basket is one man: skin him.

WATER LOVES COURT: You can buy increasingly lavish surroundings for your crib.


YOUR FACE OR MINE?: Look at how lifelike the ballers are. Scary.

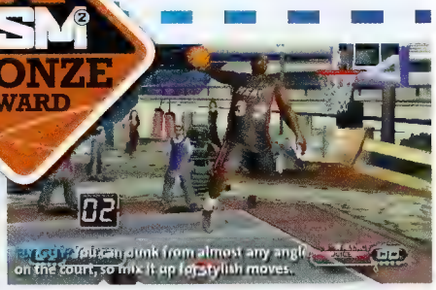
The MON£¥ $HOT
You've just scored three baskets, you're on fire and you've slammed a thunderous dunk in your opponent's face. That's what B-ball is all about.

BALL JUICE

As *Ballers Rebound* is all about the showboating, you're going to have to master the art of Juice to defeat you opponents. Holding down L1 or R1 and hitting ◎, ⊗ or □ will unleash a number of skill moves for you to play with. ⊗ allows you to either play the ball off the back-board to yourself or pass to one of your chums in the crowd. ◎ is used to adjusts dunks and jump-shots and □ serves up a flurry of mind-boggling tricks. It's then up to you to use this arsenal to make the opposition look foolish and ultimately to breeze through every tournament on offer. It's just like *FIFA Street*, but rather better.

SUPER DUNKY BALL: Charge up your Juice then ram the ball home with a huge slam.

PSM2 BRONZE AWARD


ALLEY-OOP: You can dunk from almost any angle on the court, so mix it up for stylish moves.

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Backbone
Publisher: Midway
Players: 1–2
Memory Save: 219kb

GAMEFAX
US Sports
Official License
Network
Realistic

TRIVBURST
- Customise your own baller and compete in the Rags to Riches tournament
- Purchase your own crib, cars and even friends. Just like life, eh?

PUBTALK
The smart arse thing to say down the boozer.
"Legendary baller Kareem Abdul-Jabbar has won the NBA's Most Valuable Player award more times than anyone else – six."

NBA BALLERS: REBOUND

Bling, balls and shopping for friends – the showboating B-ball action makes its all-star debut on PSP.

For a sport that doesn't have much of a following on these shores, basketball games seem to flood stores like a B-boy tidal wave. *NBA Ballers* (PSM2#53, 82%) on PS2 was criminally overlooked by Joe Public – but it's showboated onto PSP for more dunking action (and hoping to avoid another bout of mass indifference from gamers).

Quite simply, *NBA Ballers: Rebound* is a shrunken version of its PS2 incarnation, with a new subtitle tacked on for good measure. The big and bolshy ballers, from Shaq and Stephon Marbury to Kobe Bryant are as detailed as they were last time out and the game's rammed with as much slick showmanship as before. There are some new features as well – mainly the Wi-Fi mode and some quite nifty minigames. As for the main action, the game feels solid and really lets you exact some humiliating skill on your opponent. You'll taunt, you'll trick and (most importantly) you'll pick up the moves with relative ease and soon be dunking like a tea-drinker with a dry Digestive. But if there was more notable impact on your shots, *Ballers Rebound* would feel far more satisfying. As it stands everything feels a little *lightweight*.

BLING AND BUY

But while *Ballers* is fun to play, you do notice that matches soon tend to melt into a blur of bling and balls, and you end up repeating the same moves time and again. Duke moves (□) are essential for slick passing and building your house bar (nope, not a pub in your kitchen, but a finishing move that ends the game immediately regardless of score – a bit like *FIFA Street*'s Gamebreakers) but they all look very similar. You can tweak them with a Juice modifier (L1 and R1) but it doesn't make that much difference. The same applies to the dunks – *Ballers Rebound* leaves you swearing that you've just seen the same move twice, despite the fact that you've just jabbed at a completely different set of buttons to the previous time.

But despite all that, *Ballers Rebound* is a treat that really shows off the power of PSP's graphics and plays as well as its PS2 predecessor. Even if you couldn't care less about the NBA, you'll still get a kick out of shooting these hoops. **Nathan Irvine**

■ *Ballers: Rebound* is out on May 26th.

PSM2 VERDICT

GAMEPLAY
+ High-tempo balling that's slick and satisfying.
– It's no different to PS2's version. Lacks variety.

GRAPHICS
+ Super-realistic players and some lovely animations.
– Players run to compass points – no free-roaming.

SOUND
+ A fairly decent soundtrack throughout.
– Repetitive commentary grates on the proceedings.

LIFESPAN
Slamming your way through the Rags to Riches career mode will keep you going for ages.
MINUTES — YEARS

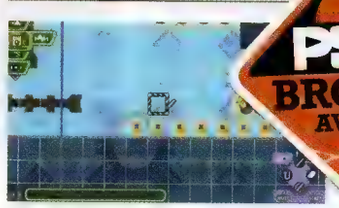
IT'S BETTER THAN...
NBA LIVE 06

IT'S WORSE THAN...
NBA STREET SHOWDOWN

One of the most complete basketball games on PSP, but surprisingly let down by the lack of dunk variety. Looks amazing, though, and there are plenty of match-ups to conquer. Nice.

78

CUT ABOVE: Cutman...as always our favourite boss. He has scissors on his head!



PSM2 BRONZE AWARD

DODGE CITY: Avoiding enemy fire is an art. You need to be precise and light-fingered.

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Capcom
Publisher: Capcom
Players: 1 – 2
Memory Save: 543kb

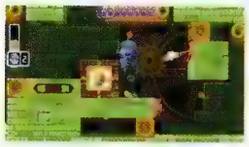
GAMEFAX
Action
Old-Skool
Platformer
Hard

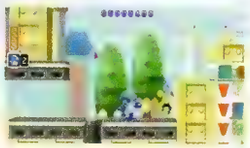
MEGAMAN POWERED UP

He's mega, he's a man... this game names itself.

MegaMan, the most mega of all men, has a number of titles heading for PSP and PS2 this year, but we reckon this might be the best. The game is split into two modes – new-style *MegaMan* and old-style *MegaMan* – and is basically a remake of the 1987 original that started it all.

Old-style mode is identical to that year's NES game, except with (slightly) improved graphics. Hmm.





The new game is better and rather more souped-up. There are three difficulty settings, bosses have a number of different attacks (we don't remember Cutman being *this* much trouble...) and there's a story linking it all together, complete with voice acting and cut-scenes.

The platforming is as solid as it ever was and the new pseudo-3D visuals have a real charm about them. Look at tiny MegaMan – isn't he cute? Yes, he is. One of the best new features lets you design your own levels via a very intuitive editor and, get this, upload it to the internet for other people to play. And, naturally, you can download other people's levels meaning, theoretically, you could play *MegaMan* forever. No, that's a *good* thing.

If we had hearts made of stone we'd say this was outmoded and tired (and it is, kinda) – but we can't help but love it. It's strangely endearing and the prospect of trading levels with Bert from Illinois or Hans from Berlin is quite exciting. We will warn you though that, being a *MegaMan* game, it's monstrously hard at times and requires the manual dexterity of a cyborg concert pianist. Otherwise, it's a decent game that's impossible to hate. **Andy Kelly**

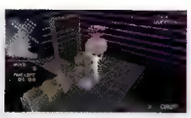
TICK TOCK: Timeman's levels are full of cogs and pendelums.

■ MegaMan Powered Up *is out now.*

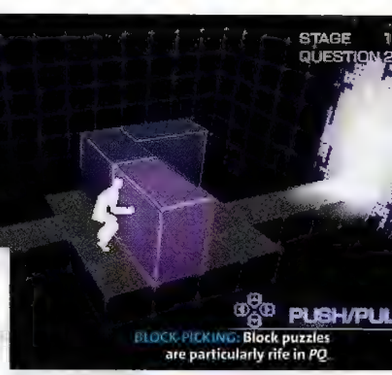
PSM2 VERDICT

Simple, playable and full of character. It may only be a remake, but the online level swapping, visual overhaul and tweaked gameplay make it feel sufficiently different.

78



PSM2 BRONZE AWARD



BLOCK-PICKING: Block puzzles are particularly rife in *PQ*.

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Nowpro
Publisher: D3PE
Players: 1
Memory Save: 300Kb

GAMEFAX
Original
Hard
Network Play
Addictive

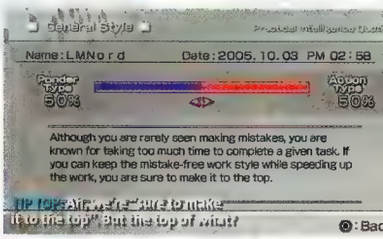
PQ: PRACTICAL INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT

Vorderman-style space genius or a drooling Danan-like lummox? If you mind your *PQ*, you'll find out...

How clever are you? That depends on what you count as 'clever'. Stephen Fry would probably tell you it depends on how many big words you know, but Brainiac on Sky would say it's about how fast you can devise a foolproof method of killing Superman. Your *real* intelligence – your IQ – is determined by how well you do on questions of logic, and this is the route *PQ* goes down, testing your spatial awareness, visual memory and predictive reasoning through a series of puzzles.

Playing like a cross between old PSone puzzler *Kurushi* and *Metal Gear Solid*'s VR Missions, *PQ* starts out deceptively simple and quickly gets tricky. Boxes have to be carried, lasers blocked and conveyor belts navigated, all against a time limit and using restricted 'moves'. After 100 'questions' it'll tell you how clever you are and whether you're a ponderer or an 'immediate action' type.

There are two main problems with this, though. Firstly, your score's a bit dependent on how comfortable you are with a pad – Nowpro have kept the controls as simple as possible but, beginners'll find themselves overstepping, and the camera always swings back to its default position. Secondly, and more obviously, you're only really measuring your IQ the first time you take the test – after that you're solving the puzzles by memory. If you're really using your brain, you'll probably want to rent this. **Joel Snape**


Name: LMNo r d
Date: 2005. 10. 03 PM 02 : 58
Ponder Type 50%
Action Type 50%
Although you are rarely seen making mistakes, you are known for taking too much time to complete a given task. If you can keep the mistake-free work style while speeding up the work, you are sure to make it to the top.

■ *PQ is out this month.*

PSM2 VERDICT

Beautifully put together, but even people without giant pulsating heads will quickly realise that £25 for six hours isn't really worth it. Rent it and get your score online.

77

PSM2 BRONZE AWARD

CHARGE OF THE FIGHT BRIGADE: Powering up your moves can have devastating effects.

CLASH AND PARRY: The fella on the right has a sword, but it's possible to dodge his swipes.

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Dimps
Publisher: Atari
Players: 1 – 2
Memory Save: 256KB

GAMEFAX
Beat 'em-up
Jap Curio
Network Play
Hard

DRAGON BALL Z: SHIN BUDOKAI

The anime masochists make their PSP debut with fighting as colourful as the characters.

BOLT FROM THE BLUE: You can launch lightning attacks to really cause some damage.

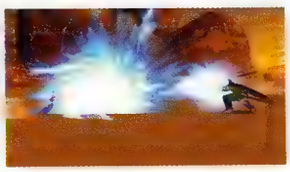
30 minutes into this beat-'em-up and we're confused. While the action is simple, it's got the most convoluted plot this side of the Matrix movies. There's the classic good versus evil battles, except when someone 'dies', they go to the underworld – but stay alive and search for the Dragon Balls, all the while fighting the alter egos of the people walking the Earth. Quite.

Thankfully, the story can be bypassed with START, leaving you to get down to some epic battles. As you'd expect from the *Dragon Ball Z* series, the visuals are dressed up prettier than a French Duke, and the cel-shaded fellas take the fight from the ground to the heavens with brilliant animation. The basic combos (set up by hitting ▢ and △) are wonderfully crafted and can be tweaked by throwing a beam of energy (◎).

Just like PS2's version, *Dragon Ball: SB* has you duking it out, dodging and countering your opponent's moves, before whacking him with a finisher. But you can feel the repetitiveness setting in as the action never really changes at all.

But *Dragon Ball: SB* must be commended. If it wasn't for the repetition, this would've been great. Maybe next time. **Nathan Irvine**

■ Shin Budokai *is out now.*



PSM2 VERDICT

It's not perfect, but the stylish visuals and hardcore fights are worth the cash. And thanks to the simple button layout, you'll find this satisfyingly accessible from the off.

7.1

FOR TRUCK'S SAKE: There's a nice variety of vehicles to get to grips with.

WHO ARE YOU SKIDDING? The brilliant physics will have you clinging to the track realistically.

FLYING MACHINES: You can gain some awesome air off the ramps.

TRACK TO THE FUTURE: Completing races will open new courses.

INFOSTRIP

DETAILS
Developer: Rainbow
Publisher: THQ
Players: 1 – 4
Memory Save: 125KB

GAMEFAX
Driving
US Sports
Network Play
Realistic

MX VS ATV UNLEASHED: ON THE EDGE

Want to play a port of an average PS2 off-road game that you've seen time and time before? Nah, nor do we.

On PS2, this franchise is an enjoyable ride up and down huge mud ramps and across open landscapes. The thrill of pulling off a 'Superman' 100 feet in the air and nailing a perfect landing definitely makes you feel like the man. However, on PSP, *MX vs ATV* comes crashing down with a faceful of dirt.

OK, so *On The Edge* looks and – give or take a few fiddly episodes with the PSP nub – feels like its PS2 brethren. But there's nothing here to warrant any new-found love for it. There isn't a career mode to work through; instead you've got a series of fractured races and freestyle trick events to challenge at your leisure – each time having to return to the main menu to start the next. Sure, it's got a Wi-Fi mode allowing four-player events, but we still need more.

Yes, *On The Edge* does delivers a technically superb experience and lets you handle quads and bikes like a pro, what with the nice pump jump system and easy to execute skills, but it's all been done before – OK, on PS2, but that version is far superior to this.

The series tends to improve each time on the big console, but on PSP, this will leave you colder than an Eskimo's nipple. **Nathan Irvine**

■ On the Edge *is in stores now*

PSM2 VERDICT

It isn't terrible, but it's doing absolutely nothing that we've not seen before. It's a realistic, but soulless, exhibition of off-road action. Get it on PS2 instead.

6.1

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Patrik Antonius
"They're all scared to play me online"
PAIR OF JACKS
The best way to play 'fish hooks'
Robert's Rules of Poker
With full glossary of poker terms
Robert Ciaffone
Cool!
How the top players keep their heads when the cards are running cold...

"THE BEST LAID FLIGHTPLANS OF MICE AND MEN"

FLIGHTPLAN

Losing your husband *and* your kid on a single flight? That's plane careless.

It's not every day that you catch Jodie Foster taking the money and running. But that's what she appears do be doing in Flightplan, which for all its claims to be a tricksy, Hitchcock-wannabe thriller is really just an excuse for Foster to look harried and slowly turn into Die Hard Mom.

She gives good gutsy, though, as Kyle Pratt, scowling and prowling the aisles of a super-jumbo she helped design and that is now carrying herself, her daughter and her late husband (he's in a coffin in the hold, not a seat) back to America. Her life takes a turn for the (even) worse, however, when daughter Julia vanishes from her seat while Kyle's grabbing forty winks. Trouble is, no one believes

"DECENT, BUT UNSPECTACULAR. FLIGHTPLAN IS RATHER MORE EASYJET THAN CONCORDE"

that she actually had a daughter. Is Kyle letting the stress of her hubbie's death get to her? Is she going crazy? Or is there (dun... dun... duuuur!) a conspiracy at work? You're going to have to watch to find out, because we're not blabbing. Whether you can actually stick it all the way through is up to you. It's not the cast's fault – Foster and the likes of Sean Bean and Peter Sarsgaard do their best with what they're given, and there *are* one or two good plot turns as the drama unfolds. Sarsgaard particularly gets to tackle a role that's unlike his usual, easy-going persona.

PLANE CRAZY?

It's just that it becomes an effort to keep enjoying the film, which starts to devolve into a far more routine movie than we're led to believe from the earlier scenes. And the little kid at the start is so typically cutesy and Hollywood-perfect that you end up desperately hoping that she really never existed in the first place. And while director Robert Schwentke admirably tries as much as possible to open up the action (this really is the biggest, most elaborate passenger jet you've ever seen), the claustrophobia and lack of variety soon gets a little tiring. A decent, if distinctly unspectacular popcorn thriller that might do for an evening's rental, but certainly isn't worth actually purchasing. More of an Easyjet than a Concorde then.

STARRING
- Jodie Foster
- Peter Sarsgaard
- Sean Bean
- Kate Beahan
- Erika Christensen
- Greta Scacchi
- Lois Hall

DIRECTOR
- Robert Schwentke

CERTIFICATE
- 15

PRICE
- £19.99

RELEASE
- Out Now

PSM2 VERDICT

MOVIE	GOOD+BAD	DVD
+ Great set design. Looks stunning. – Bland plot revelations undermine the premise.	+ Foster is suitably stressed. – Overly straightforward characters.	+ Decent amount of features... – ...but they're factory-standard

EXTRAS

Flightplan is hauling the usual batch of 'how we did it' features on the effects, casting and post-production. No commentary, but Schwentke pops up in a 'meet the director' slot.

IT'S BETTER THAN...
AIR FORCE ONE

IT'S WORSE THAN...
VERTIGO

Economy class thriller that rarely excites but does just about enough to entertain. If it were a stewardess, it'd be the portly one with the laddered tights.

60

"THIS MOVIE'S LIKE A GREAT MEAL – YOU'LL GOBLET DOWN"

HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE

Harry's game puts him in danger... again.

STARRING
- Daniel Radcliffe
- Emma Watson
- Rupert Grint
- Jason Isaacs
- Eric Sykes
- Timothy Spall
- David Tennant
- Robbie Coltrane

DIRECTOR
- Mike Newell

CERTIFICATE
- 12

PRICE
- £24.99

RELEASE
- Out Now

Like a freight train, the inevitable Potter saga rumbles on. Fortunately, as the money rolls in and the producers get more confident, the quality continues to improve, though Goblet isn't a massive step-up from Azkaban, more a step sideways. Director Mike Newell keeps up the darker, tones that crept into the series with Part Three, and guides his kid cast to better performances as they really start to grow up. Hormones are just as important as harpies and hobgoblins this year, which means the story feels a little more realistic and grounded in teen angst. Don't panic, though, this isn't Potter: The Hollyoaks Years; when Voldemort finally shows up, it's a great clash.

DARK SIDE

Of course, there's a downside to the later Potter novels. Goblet is a doorstep-sized whopper, and there were rumours that the filmmakers would end up splitting the book in two in order to get all the plotlines in. Sadly, this single entry in the series can't hope to contain everything and fans will likely decry a lot of the missing subplots (though let's face it, no-one needs the House Elves' rights nonsense). At times, it feels like the plot cuts to the quick too easily, resulting in a standard thriller. But there's magic and marvels to be had still, in another great Potter movie.

PSM² VERDICT

MOVIE	GOOD+BAD	DVD
+ Decent character development – Some chopped plots make it feel rushed.	+ Amazing, dazzling special effects. – Some characters area a bit sidelined.	+ Plenty of extra material on here. – Half of it's for real youngsters

EXTRAS

Harry's latest is another mixed bag, features-wise. There's the usual assortment of Making Of goodness, but half of them are given over to games for the young 'uns.

IT'S BETTER THAN... PHILOSOPHER'S STONE

IT'S WORSE THAN... PRISONER OF AZKABAN

As the wizards grow older, the quality of their movies gets better. Excellent entertainment for both kids and adults alike. Well worth watching.

78

THE CONSTANT GARDENER

STARRING
- Ralph Fiennes
- Rachel Weisz

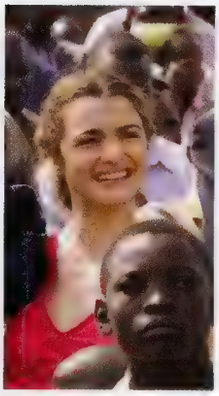
DIRECTOR
- Fernando Meirelles

CERTIFICATE
- 15

PRICE
- £19.99

RELEASE
- Out Now

Proof that indie movies need not all be in black and white and about gay cowboys eating pudding, The Constant Gardener blasts on to the screen with tremendous style and power. Based on a John Le Carré thriller, the film follows a dull diplomat (Fiennes) who is shaken from his average life by his activist wife's (Weisz) death. As he investigates what happened to her, he uncovers a massive conspiracy in Africa, run by one of the biggest British drug companies. As you do. Director Fernando Meirelles helmed the hyperactive 'GoodFellas in Brazil' movie City Of God and he brings just as much fire to this film. Fiennes and Weisz are both great throughout and the pace will take your breath away. One of the best pieces of independent cinema in recent years, you really should see this.



88

THE TRANSPORTER 2

STARRING
- Jason Statham
- Amber Valletta

DIRECTOR
- Louis Leterrier

CERTIFICATE
- 15

PRICE
- £17.99

RELEASE
- Out Now

The Transporter was a cult hit a couple of years ago, a film so stupid and over the top that it was massive fun. Now the director and his star – Brit thesp Jason Statham – return to make a sequel that is, if anything, even more outrageous. Sadly this time it just adds up to one big, steaming pile of crap. Outrageous crap, but still crap. Still, if you loved the first film and are simply ready to lap up more utterly unbelievable action nonsense, then your doorway to heaven is on this shiny disc. Forget wondering what the plot's all about, just enjoy Statham kicking arse and the stunt team making you believe a car can fly. A lot. Logic? Here's a convenient window for it to fly out of. And you may as well throw your money after it than buy this.

45

Films from another space and

ANIMANIA

DIVERGENCE EVE

When a bevy of beauties is forced to put their lives on the line to answer the call of duty, they begin a voyage leading directly into the heart of evil. A dark tale enlivened by a shocking mystery, which will have you guessing until the final fade out. Featuring gorgeous character designs by fan-favorite Toshinari Yamashita, Misaki Chronicles is an addictive, modern sci-fi series.

68

SHADOW SKILL: VOLUME 03

The kingdom of Kuruda is home to the fiercest fighters in the world; men and women who live solely for the chance to fight and become the greatest in the world. Young Gau Ban (possibly Ray's brother) dreams of becoming the warrior of his generation and, with his sister Elle and the legendary Scarface, Gau trains and battles for the mastery of the Shadow Skill.

71

GILGAMESH TABLET 5

Gilgamesh is a dark world where the sky has been turned into a giant mirror and civilization is only a shadow of its former self. Where beautiful assassins transform into terrifying winged creatures. Where children are born with amazing powers. And where a brother and sister are hunted by organizations with shadowy agendas. Beautifully macabre.

81

ALSO RELEASED

SAW II

Out Now Cert 18 Price £19.99

The psychotic killer Jigsaw is back with a fresh batch of unwilling victims and a whole range of new tortures to try out. More of the same goresome goodness.

70

A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE

Out Now Cert 18 Price £19.99

An ace thriller based on a graphic novel. Viggo Mortensen is a family man with a dodgy, mob-enforcer past. And guess what? The past comes back to haunt him! Top.

82

THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE

Out Now Cert 15 Price £19.99

Based on real life events, this is a courtroom drama meets creepy supernatural thriller. Think Law & Order: Exorcist and you're there. It never quite gels, though.

61

HUSTLE & FLOW

Out Now Cert 15 Price £19.99

Terrence Howard gives an Oscar-worthy performance in this drama about a pimp trying to become a music star. Great turns round and some stunning scenes.

79

COMING SOON

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LEGEND

SEEING IS BELIEVING

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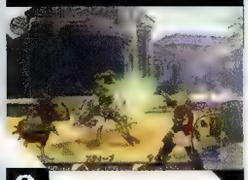
TOP FIVE

DRIVING

1. BURNOUT REVENGE
2. GRAN TURISMO 4
3. COLIN MCRAE RALLY 04
4. MIDNIGHT CLUB 3
5. TOCA RACE DRIVER 3

ROLE-PLAYING GAMES



1. ROGUE GALAXY
2. DRAGON QUEST
3. KINGDOM HEARTS 2
4. DARK CHRONICLE
5. FINAL FANTASY X

ACTION GAMES

1. GTA: SAN ANDREAS
2. RESIDENT EVIL 4
3. GOD OF WAR
4. ONIMUSHA 3
5. DEVIL MAY CRY

GAME NAME ISSUE	ISSUE	SCORE	AWARD
7 BLADES	11	72%	
7 SINS	63	58%	
13 (XIII)	42	87%	
24 – THE GAME	72	80%	
25 TO LIFE	73	35%	
50 CENT: BULLETPROOF	70	48%	
187: RIDE OR DIE	66	72%	
2002 FIFA WORLD CUP	22	71%	
ACE COMBAT 4: SHATTERED SKIES	17	80%	
ACE COMBAT 5	57	79%	
ACTIVISION ANTHOLOGY	36	40%	
AGE OF EMPIRES 2	15	76%	
AGGRESSIVE INLINE	24	83%	
AIRBLADE	16	77%	
ALIAS	47	79%	
ALEX FERGUSON'S PLAYER MANAGER	15	65%	
ALIEN HOMINID	61	74%	
ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2004	35	67%	
ALONE IN THE DARK: THE NEW NIGHTMARE	15	66%	
ALTERED BEAST	61	42%	
ANIMANIACS: THE GREAT EDGAR HUNT	64	62%	
APE ESCAPE 2	30	80%	
APE ESCAPE 3	73	71%	
AQUA AQUA	04	71%	
ARCTIC THUNDER	16	58%	
ARC: TWILIGHT OF SPIRITS	46	68%	
AREA 51	62	79%	
ARMY MEN AIR ATTACK: BLADE'S REVENGE	11	47%	
ARMY MEN RTS	24	56%	
ARMY MEN: SARGE'S HEROES 2	09	40%	
ASTRO BOY	61	69%	
ATHENS 2004	51	51%	
A-TRAIN 6	49	60%	
ATV OFFROAD FURY 2	40	73%	
ATV OFFROAD FURY 3	68	74%	
ATV QUAD POWER RACING 2	33	68%	
ASTERIX AND OBELIX XXL	46	60%	
AUTO MODELLISTA	28	80%	
BAD BOYS 2	48	51%	
BACKYARD WRESTLING	42	45%	
BACKYARD WRESTLING 2	56	46%	
BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE	17	70%	
BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE 2	04	82%	
BARBARIAN	44	66%	
THE BARD'S TALE	60	74%	
BASS STRIKE	18	64%	
BATMAN BEGINS	65	41%	
BATMAN VS. THE ARMY OF TSU	44	43%	
BATTLE ENGINE AQUILA	31	78%	
BATTLEFIELD 2: MODERN COMBAT	68	82%	
BATTLESTAR GALACTICA	44	59%	
BEAT DOWN: FISTS OF VENGEANCE	67	54%	
BEN HUR: BLOOD OF BRAVES	34	42%	
BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL	42	82%	
BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS 2: TRUCK ME HARDER	65	52%	
BRIAN LARA INTERNATIONAL CRICKET	64	60	
BLACK	72	89%	
BLACK HAWK DOWN	64	59%	
BLOOD OMEN 2	22	79%	
BLOODRAYNE	36	67%	
BLOODRAYNE 2	63	39%	
BLOODY ROAR 3	11	79%	
BLOOD WILL TELL	57	60%	
BLOWOUT	58	49%	
BMX XXX	30	58%	
BOMBERMAN HARDBALL	65	60%	
BOMBERMAN KART	41	51%	
BOUNCER, THE	11	66%	
BOXING CHAMPIONS	41	40%	
BREATH OF FIRE: DRAGON QUARTER	41	70%	
BRITNEY'S DANCE BEAT	24	58%	
BROTHERS IN ARMS: THE ROAD TO HILL 30	60	82%	
BROTHERS IN ARMS: EARNED IN BLOOD	68	84%	
BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER: CHAOS BLEEDS	41	74%	
BURNOUT	15	88%	
BURNOUT 2: POINT OF IMPACT	28	91%	
Beautiful, emotional racing that you have to play to fully appreciate.			
BURNOUT 3: TAKEDOWN	54	93%	
Smooth, fast and online too. You'd be a fool not to buy it.			
BURNOUT REVENGE	67	93%	
As astonishing as ever, and as pure a videogame as you'll ever see.			
BUZZ! THE MUSIC QUIZ	68	84%	
CABELA'S DANGEROUS HUNTS	53	57%	
CALL OF DUTY: FINEST HOUR	56	87%	
CALL OF DUTY 2: BIG RED ONE	70	86%	
CAPCOM FIGHTING JAM	58	53%	
CAPCOM VS SNK 2: MARK OF THE MILLENNIUM 2001	17	83%	
CAPCOM CLASSICS COLLECTION	68	53%	
CART FURY	12	65%	
CASPER: SPIRIT DIMENSIONS	22	48%	
CASTLEVANIA: CURSE OF DARKNESS	72	64%	
CASTLEWEEN	30	45%	

NEW ENTRY

GAME NAME ISSUE	ISSUE	SCORE	AWARD
CATWOMAN	52	30%	
CEL DAMAGE OVERDRIVE	36	50%	
CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 5	63	62%	
CHAMPIONS OF NORRATH: REALMS OF EVERQUEST	47	82%	
CHAMPIONS: RETURN TO ARMS	60	69%	
CHAOS LEGION	39	86%	
CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY	66	31%	
CHOROQ	64	25%	
CHOPLIFTER: CRISIS` SHIELD	35	48%	
CHRONICLES OF NARNIA	69	67%	
CIRCUS MAXIMUS: CHARIOT WARS	25	55%	
CLOCK TOWER 3	37	59%	
CLUB FOOTBALL	42	61%	
CLUB FOOTBALL 2	55	67%	
CODENAME KIDS NEXT DOOR: OP VIDEOGAME	71	33%	
COLIN MCRAE RALLY '04	40	92%	
A defining moment for rally games. If you like rallying, get it.			
COLD FEAR	60	83%	
COLD WINTER	62	80%	
COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2005	54	88%	
COLOSSEUM: ROAD TO FREEDOM	65	51%	
COMBAT ELITE: WW2 PARATROOPERS	52	77%	
COMMANDOS 2: MEN OF COURAGE	24	79%	
COMMANDOS STRIKE FORCE	73	68%	
CONFLICT: DESERT STORM	27	78%	
CONFLICT DESERT STORM 2	39	88%	
CONFLICT: VIETNAM	54	76%	
CONFLICT: GLOBAL STORM	67	78%	
CONFLICT ZONE	22	79%	
CONSPIRACY: WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION	65	23%	
CONSTANTINE	60	60%	
CONTRA: SHATTERED SOLDIER	32	52%	
CRASH BANDICOOT: THE WRATH OF CORTEX	17	66%	
CRASH 'N BURN	57	46%	
CRASH TAG TEAM RACING	70	74%	
CRASH TWINSANITY	55	49%	
CRAZY FROG RACER	71	37%	
CRAZY TAXI	10	80%	

NEW ENTRY

GAME NAME ISSUE	ISSUE	SCORE	AWARD
CRICKET 2005	64	79%	
CRIME LIFE	70	30%	
CRIMSON SEA 2	53	70%	
CRISIS ZONE	53	59%	
CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON	44	35%	
CY GIRLS	50	74%	
DAKAR 2	34	50%	
DANCE UK	42	67%	
DANCING STAGE FUSION	58	67%	
DANCING STAGE MEGAMIX	36	85%	
DARK ANGEL	34	45%	
DARK CHRONICLE	37	90%	
Debatably better than *Final Fantasy X*...			
DARK CLOUD	11	81%	
DARK SUMMIT	21	56%	
DARKWATCH	67	75%	
DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX 2	14	76%	
DEAD OR ALIVE 2	05	83%	
DEAD TO RIGHTS	38	70%	
DEAD TO RIGHTS 2	65	41%	
DEATH BY DEGREES	60	42%	
DEFENDER	31	76%	
DEF JAM: FIGHT FOR NY	54	86%	
DEF JAM VENDETTA	36	75%	
DESTROY ALL HUMANS	64	83%	
DESTRUCTION DERBY ARENAS	45	42%	
DEUS EX: THE CONSPIRACY	22	88%	
DEVIL KINGS	69	64%	
DEVIL MAY CRY	15	90%	
Blindingly gorgeous and cracking to play. A brilliant advert for PS2.			
DEVIL MAY CRY 2	33	72%	
DEVIL MAY CRY 3	60	89%	
DIE HARD VENDETTA	38	54%	
DINO STALKER	26	58%	
DISGAEA: HOUR OF DARKNESS	49	86%	
DISNEY'S EXTREME SKATE ADVENTURE	40	78%	
DJ: DECKS & FX	53	74%	
DONALD DUCK PK	30	64%	
DOWNFORCE	23	64%	
DOT HACK INFECTION: PART ONE	47	58%	
DOWNHILL DOMINATION	46	80%	
DRAGON BALL Z: BUDOKAI	30	60%	
DRAGON BALL Z: TENKAICHI	68	74%	
DRAKENGARD	50	75%	
DRAKENGARD 2	73	54%	
DRAGON QUEST VIII	71	90%	
The RPG series finally makes its way to PS2, and it's wonderful.			
DRAGON RAGE	23	43%	
DRAKAN: THE ANCIENTS' GATES	20	75%	
DRIVEN	17	46%	
DRIVEN TO DESTRUCTION	55	65%	
DRIV3R	50	90%	
Superb in Free Ride, less so in Story Mode, but balls-out fun			
DRIVER: PARALLEL LINES	73	79%	
DRIVING EMOTION TYPE-S	01	57%	
DR MUTO	33	59%	
DROME RACERS	31	50%	

BRONZE AWARD: A very enjoyable and solid game scoring 70-79% | SILVER AWARD: A top-notch PS2 title that scored between 80-89% | GOLD AWARD: A game scoring 90% or more. An absolute classic.

TOP FIVE

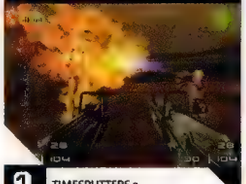
BEAT-'EM-UPS

1. SOUL CALIBUR 3
2. TEKKEN 5
3. FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3
4. HYPER STREET FIGHTER 2
5. MORTAL KOMBAT: DECEPTION

EXTREME SPORTS

1. SSX3
2. TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3
3. SSX TRICKY
4. TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND
5. DOWNHILL DOMINATION

FIRST-PERSON SHOOTERS



1. TIMESPLITTERS 2
2. HALF-LIFE
3. BLACK
4. DEUS EX
5. CALL OF DUTY 2

ALL-TIME BEST

1. GTA: SAN ANDREAS
2. RESIDENT EVIL 4
3. METAL GEAR SOLID 3
4. PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 5
5. TIMESPLITTERS 2

GAME NAME ISSUE	ISSUE	SCORE	AWARD
DYNASTY TACTICS 2	44	69%	
DYNASTY WARRIORS 3: XTREME LEGENDS	34	69%	
DYNASTY WARRIORS 4	37	80%	
DYNASTY WARRIORS 4: XTREME LEGENDS	46	70%	
DYNASTY WARRIORS 5	63	53%	
ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE	18	52%	
EGGO MANIA	27	40%	
EJAY CLUBWORLD	26	84%	
ENDGAME	25	49%	
ENGLAND INTERNATIONAL FOOTBALL	49	62%	
ENTER THE MATRIX	37	81%	
ENTHUSIA PROFESSIONAL RACING	62	77%	
EOE: EVE OF EXTINCTION	22	71%	
EPHEMERAL FANTASIA	12	80%	
ESCAPE FROM MONKEY ISLAND	12	82%	
ESPN INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD	04	63%	
ESPN INTERNATIONAL WINTER SPORTS	20	55%	
ESPN NBA 2NIGHT 2002	24	72%	
ESPN NFL 2K5	59	83%	
ESPN NHL 2K5	59	71%	
ESPN NHL HOCKEY	44	78%	
ESPN X GAMES SKATEBOARDING	15	62%	
ESPN WINTER X GAMES SNOWBOARDING 2	20	69%	
EVERBLUE 2	34	56%	
EVERQUEST ONLINE ADVENTURES	41	70%	
EVERYBODY'S GOLF	67	87%	
EVIL DEAD: A FISTFUL OF BOOMSTICK	37	68%	
EVIL DEAD REGENERATION	70	47%	
EVOLUTION SKATEBOARDING	33	54%	
EVOLUTION SNOWBOARDING	33	43%	
EXTERMINATION	09	78%	
EYE TOY: ANTIGRAV	63	66%	
EYETOY: PLAY 2	56	75%	
EYETOY: PLAY 3	69	70%	
F1 2005	64	83%	
F1 RACING CHAMPIONSHIP	07	66%	
FAHRENHEIT	66	87%	
FALLOUT: BROTHERHOOD OF STEEL	48	46%	
FANTASTIC 4	65	65%	
FANTAVISION	01	85%	
FATAL FRAME 3: THE TORMENTED	71	79%	
FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING, THE	30	70%	
FERRARI F355 CHALLENGE	27	67%	
FIFA 2005	54	79%	
FIFA 06	67	71%	
FIFA STREET	60	63%	
FIFA STREET 2	73	71%	
FIGHT CLUB	59	19%	
FIGHT NIGHT 2004	48	88%	
FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 2	61	89%	
FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3	73	87%	
FINAL FANTASY X	23	91%	
The most life-swallowing RPG of them all.			
FINAL FANTASY 10-2	44	83%	
FINAL FANTASY XI (IMPORT)	49	85%	
FINDING NEMO	41	71%	
FIREBLADE	24	68%	
FIREFIGHTER FD18	49	76%	
FLAT OUT	56	77%	
FLIPNIC	45	76%	
FLOW: URBAN DANCE UPRISING	72	69%	
FORBIDDEN SIREN	44	80%	
FORD RACING 3	56	34%	
FORD STREET RACING	73	68%	
FORGOTTEN REALMS: DEMON STONE	54	74%	
FORMULA ONE 2004	52	65%	
FREAK OUT	13	79%	
FREAKY FLYERS	42	77%	
FREEDOM FIGHTERS	40	92%	
An utterly compelling squad-based shooter.			
FREEKSTYLE	25	59%	
FREESTYLE METAL X	40	74%	
FREQUENCY	23	64%	
FRIENDS: THE ONE WITH ALL THE TRIVIA	73	44%	
FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR	61	85%	
FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR: TEN HAMMERS	73	85%	
FUR FIGHTERS	10	86%	
FUTURAMA	37	75%	
FUTURE TACTICS	57	64%	
G1 JOCKEY 3	34	43%	
GALERIANS: ASH	34	50%	
GALLOP RACER 2	60	34%	
GAMETRAK: DARK WIND	54	55%	
GAMETRAK: REAL WORLD GOLF	68	74%	
GAUNTLET: SEVEN SORROWS	71	40%	
GENJI	66	84%	
GET ON DA MIC	56	49%	
GETAWAY, THE	31	78%	
GETAWAY: BLACK MONDAY, THE	56	71%	
GHOST IN THE SHELL: STAND ALONE COMPLEX	62	47%	
GHOST RECON	30	65%	
GHOST RECON: JUNGLE STORM	47	75%	
GHOST RECON 2	57	63%	
GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO	17	80%	
GIFT	12	51%	
GITAROO MAN	22	79%	
GLADIUS	42	52%	
THE GODFATHER	73	75%	
GOD OF WAR	62	92%	
God Of War grabs you by the balls and doesn't let go.			
GOBLIN COMMANDER: UNLEASH THE HORDE	47	65%	
GOLDENEYE: ROGUE AGENT	56	58%	
GRADIUS V	51	83%	
GRAND PRIX CHALLENGE	31	85%	
GRAND THEFT AUTO 3	16	92%	
Its scope and and tiny touches are some of the most impressive yet.			
GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY	29	97%	
The music, the styling, the freedom... (almost) nothing beats it.			
GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS	56	99%	
Simply the best game on PS2. Mind-boggling.			
GRAND TOUR RACING GT-R 400	51	53%	
GRAN TURISMO 3	13	93%	
The most complete racing game yet.			
GRAN TURISMO 4	59	92%	
Still the most serious racing sim on PS2.			
GRAN TURISMO 4: PROLOGUE	50	79%	
GRAVITY GAMES BIKE: STREET, VERT, DIRT	28	48%	
GREAT ESCAPE, THE	39	73%	
GREGORY HORROR SHOW	42	70%	
GROOVE RIDER	45	52%	
G-SURFERS	16	49%	
GUILTY GEAR X2	35	84%	
GUILTY GEAR ISUKA	65	79%	
GUMBALL 3000	29	73%	
GUITAR HERO	71	90%	
The most fun possible while making a complete show of yourself.			
GUN	69	88%	
GUNBIRD: SPECIAL EDITION	62	39%	
GUNDAM: FEDERATION VS ZEON	29	39%	
GUNFIGHTER 2: REVENGE OF JESSE JAMES	35	40%	
GUNGRAVE OD	64	71%	
GUN GRIFFON BLAZE	07	70%	
HALF-LIFE	16	90%	
A port of one of the best PC games ever made. This is a must-buy.			
HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS	31	65%	
HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE	70	51%	
HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN	51	76%	
HARRY POTTER: THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE	44	55%	
HARVEST MOON: A WONDERFUL LIFE	71	85%	
HAUNTING GROUND	62	78%	
HAUNTED MANSION, THE	46	70%	
HAVEN: CALL OF THE KING	29	81%	
HEADHUNTER	19	81%	
HEADHUNTER: REDEMPTION	53	53%	
HELLO KITTY: ROLLER RESCUE	71	59%	
HERDY GERDY	21	69%	
HEROES OF THE PACIFIC	67	79%	
HIGH HEAT MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL	24	71%	
HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN	28	89%	
HITMAN: CONTRACTS	49	90%	
A game that promotes experimentation and plays brilliantly.			
HOTWHEELS VELOCITY X MAXIMUM JUSTICE	31	51%	
HULK, THE	38	70%	
HUNTER WAYWARD: THE RECKONING	41	30%	
HYPER STREET FIGHTER II: 15TH ANNIVERSARY EDT.	46	89%	
ICO	71	93%	
Now it's re-released, you *must* play this ultra-emotional epic.			
INCREDIBLE HULK: ULTIMATE DESTRUCTION	66	88%	
INCREDIBLES, THE	57	72%	
INCREDIBLES: RISE OF THE UNDERMINER	70	50%	
INDIANA JONES AND THE EMPEROR'S TOMB	39	80%	
INDYCAR SERIES 2005	53	63%	
I-NINJA	45	85%	
INTERNATIONAL CUE CLUB	24	56%	
ISLAND EXTREME STUNTS	33	65%	
ISS3	34	78%	
ITALIAN JOB: LA HEIST, THE	40	51%	
JACKED	72	34%	
JADE COCOON 2	22	70%	
JAK & DAXTER	18	85%	
JAK 2: RENEGADE	40	93%	
Vast, well-built and bursting with distractions.			
JAK 3	56	88%	
JAK X	68	84%	
JAMES BOND 007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING	46	77%	
JAMES BOND 007: FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE	69	69%	
JAMES BOND 007 IN AGENT UNDER FIRE	17	88%	
JAMES BOND 007 IN... NIGHTFIRE	30	78%	
JET SKI RIDERS	18	38%	
JONNY MOSELEY MAD TRIX	20	38%	
JUDGE DREDD: DREDD VS DEATH	40	83%	
JUICED	62	68%	
JUNGLE BOOK GROOVE PARTY	10	50%	
JURASSIC PARK: OPERATION GENESIS	34	61%	
KAIDO RACER	71	53%	
KATAMARI DAMASHII	49	83%	
KARAOKE STAGE	49	85%	
KENGO	09	60%	
KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER	28	75%	
KESSEN II	20	66%	
KESSEN III	61	82%	
KILL.SWITCH	44	78%	
KILLER7	64	83%	
KILLZONE	55	88%	
KING ARTHUR	57	37%	
KINGDOM HEARTS 2	73	90%	
Hang out with Donald, Pluto and the Disney mob – amazing			
KING OF FIGHTERS 2002	64	58%	
KING OF FIGHTERS: MAXIMUM IMPACT	61	79%	
KING OF ROUTE 66	41	44%	
KINGDOM HEARTS	29	88%	
KING KONG	69	72%	
KLONOA 2	10	73%	
KNIGHT RIDER 2	57	21%	
KNOCKOUT KINGS 2001	07	79%	
KNOCKOUT KINGS 2002	21	83%	
KURI KURI MIX	10	78%	
KYA: DARK LINEAGE	45	73%	
LA PUCELLE TACTICS	52	80%	
LA RUSH	67	75%	
LEGEND OF KAY	59	69%	
LEGENDS OF WRESTLING 2	33	68%	
LEGION: LEGEND OF EXCALIBUR	27	70%	
LEGO STAR WARS	62	78%	
LEISURE SUIT LARRY: MAGNA CUM LAUDE	54	80%	
LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS	58	55%	
LE MANS 24 HOURS	12	73%	
LETHAL SKIES	27	63%	
LETHAL SKIES 2	48	68%	
LE TOUR DE FRANCE	23	75%	
LE TOUR DE FRANCE: CENTENARY EDITION	38	71%	
LMA MANAGER 2005	55	80%	
LMA MANAGER 2006	68	85%	
LONDON RACER: WORLD CHALLENGE	40	59%	
LOONY TUNES SPACE RACE	19	65%	
LORD OF THE RINGS: RETURN OF THE KING	43	84%	
LORD OF THE RINGS: THE THIRD AGE	55	53%	
LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS	29	76%	
LOTUS CHALLENGE	16	60%	
MACE GRIFFIN: BOUNTY HUNTER	38	79%	
MADAGASCAR	65	56%	
MADDEN NFL 2005	54	82%	
MADDEN NFL 2006	69	85%	
MAD MAESTROS	22	70%	
MAFIA	46	71%	
MAKAI KINGDOM	70	83%	
MALICE	51	60%	
MANHUNT	43	91%	
Chilling, vicious and utterly remarkable Rockstar goodness.			
MARC ECKO'S GETTING UP	72	88%	
MARK OF KRI, THE	33	74%	
MARVEL NEMESIS: RISE OF THE IMPERFECTS	68	41%	
MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2	29	84%	
MASHED: FULLY LOADED	62	70%	
MASTER RALLY	24	55%	
MATRIX: PATH OF NEO	69	81%	
MAXIMO	20	84%	
MAXIMO VS THE ARMY OF ZIN	42	81%	
MAX PAYNE	19	82%	
MAX PAYNE 2: THE FALL OF MAX PAYNE	45	65%	
MDK2 ARMAGEDDON	09	76%	
MEDAL OF HONOR: EUROPEAN ASSAULT	64	52%	
MEGA MAN X8	59	45%	
MEN IN BLACK 2: ALIEN ESCAPE	26	42%	
MERCENARIES	58	88%	
METAL ARMS: GLITCH IN THE SYSTEM	41	87%	
METAL GEAR SOLID 2	17	96%	
Near perfectly balanced and worth every bit of the hype.			
METAL GEAR SOLID 3	57	97%	
We didn't think it could get better. We were wrong. A masterpiece.			
METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE	33	78%	
METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SUBSISTENCE	73	90%	
Metal Gear 3, but online and entirely in Japanese. Brilliant.			
METAL SLUG 3	55	79%	
METAL SLUG 5	72	54%	
MIAMI VICE	58	13%	
MICRO MACHINES	30	59%	
MIDNIGHT CLUB 2	37	80%	
MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION	61	91%	
The street racing genre at its peak, *Dub Edition* is sex on wheels.			
MIDWAY ARCADE TREASURES	45	48%	
MIDWAY ARCADE TREASURES 2	55	71%	
MIDWAY ARCADE TREASURES 3	67	12%	
MIKE TYSON HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING	23	61%	
MINI DESKTOP RACING	71	43%	
MINORITY REPORT	31	60%	
MONKEY MANIA	60	69%	
MONSTER HUNTER	62	70%	
MONSTERS, INC	19	41%	
MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE	33	85%	
MORTAL KOMBAT: DECEPTION	54	85%	
MORTAL KOMBAT: SHAOLIN MONKS	67	82%	
MOTO GP3	35	74%	
MOTO GP4	63	78%	
MOTOR MAYHEM	15	63%	
MR GOLF	34	56%	
MR MOSKEETO	22	52%	
MTV MUSIC GENERATOR 2	10	90%	
A musical pandora's box, offering professional results to everyone.			
MTX MOTOTRAX	49	79%	
MUMMY RETURNS, THE	17	46%	
MUSIC 3000	35	81%	
MX 2002	14	78%	
MX RIDER	15	62%	
MX SUPERFLY	27	72%	
MX UNLEASHED	48	75%	
MX VS. ATV: UNLEASHED	61	78%	
MYSTIC HEROES	34	67%	
NAMCO MUSEUM 50TH ANNIVERSARY	73	51%	
NANO BREAKER	59	59%	
NARC	62	45%	

NBA 2K3	35	70%	
NBA BALLERS	53	82%	
NBA JAM	42	77%	
NBA LIVE 2004	42	84%	
NBA STREET VOLUME 2	35	85%	
NBA STREET VOLUME 3	60	87%	
NEED FOR SPEED 2	55	87%	
NEED FOR SPEED: MOST WANTED	69	88%	
NEXT GENERATION TENNIS 2003	38	55%	
NFL STREET	46	64%	
NFL STREET 2	61	55%	
NHL HITZ 2003	28	80%	
NHL HITZ: PRO	42	80%	
THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE XMAS: OOGIE'S REVENGE	67	61%	
NIGHTSHADE	46	73%	
NINJA ASSAULT	27	71%	
NINJABREAD MAN	69	32%	
NO ONE LIVES FOREVER	21	71%	
NY RACE	17	40%	
OBSCURE	54	80%	
ONI	07	62%	
ONIMUSHA 2	27	89%	
ONIMUSHA 3	50	92%	
Provocative, exquisite gameplay backed up by plush visuals.			
ONIMUSHA: BLADE WARRIORS	45	75%	
ONIMUSHA: DAWN OF DREAMS	73	79%	

BRONZE AWARD: A very enjoyable and solid game scoring 70-79%

SILVER AWARD: A top-notch PS2 title that scored between 80-89%

GOLD AWARD: A game scoring 90% or more. An absolute classic.

The Truth

SCANDALOUS GOSSIP,T, ZERO BULLSHIT

GAME NAME ISSUE	ISSUE	SCORE	AWARD
OPERATION WINBACK	08	68%	
OUTLAW GOLF 2	57	78%	
OUTLAW VOLLEYBALL REMIXED	68	50%	
OUTRUN 2006: COAST 2 COAST	73	89%	
PAC-MAN WORLD 2	33	75%	
PAC-MAN WORLD 3	72	63%	
PARAPPA THE RAPPER 2	16	75%	
PARIS-DAKAR RALLY	15	60%	
PERFECT ACE PRO TENNIS	38	38%	
PETER PAN: LEGEND OF NEVERLAND	20	50%	
PILOT DOWN: BEHIND ENEMY LINES	65	53%	
PITFALL: THE LOST EXPEDITION	47	71%	
PIRATES: LEGEND OF BLACK KAT	21	38%	
THE PLAN	72	48%	
PLAYBOY: THE MANSION	60	51%	
POLICE 24/7	19	49%	
POOL MASTER	05	45%	
POOL PARADISE	48	72%	
POOL SHARK 2	7	56%	
PORTAL RUNNER	16	55%	
PREDATOR: CONCRETE JUNGLE	63	58%	
PREMIER MANAGER	31	80%	
PREMIER MANAGER 2004/2005	57	63%	
PRIDE FC	34	75%	
PRIMAL	33	79%	
PRINCE OF PERSIA: WARRIOR WITHIN	56	87%	
PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE TWO THRONES	70	77%	
PRISONER OF WAR	24	73%	
PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4	55	94%	
Incredible customisation and sublime control. Vital.			
PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 5	68	93%	
The best Pro Evo yet – the most satisfying football game ever.			
PROJECT EDEN	14	86%	
PROJECT: SNOWBLIND	59	83%	
PROJECT ZERO 2: CRIMSON BUTTERFLY	45	82%	
PRO RALLY 2002	22	68%	
PSI-OPS: THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY	52	86%	
PSYCHONAUTS	65	90%	
Explore the mental landscapes of certified nutters. Superb.			
PTO IV	48	41%	
PUNISHER, THE	60	82%	
PUYO POP FEVER	46	85%	
QUAKE 3 REVOLUTION	08	85%	
RAINBOW SIX 3	47	77%	
RAINBOW SIX 4: LOCKDOWN	67	68%	
RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP	24	56%	
RAPALA PRO FISHING	65	40%	
RATCHET & CLANK	29	91%	
A labour of love on every crafted level. Great stuff.			
RATCHET & CLANK 2	42	85%	
RATCHET & CLANK 3	56	92%	
PS2 platforming perfection. It gets no better than this. A must.			
RATCHET GLADIATOR	69	85%	
RAYMAN	18	48%	
RAYMAN REVOLUTION	05	68%	
RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC	34	80%	
RC REVENGE PRO	04	56%	
READY 2 RUMBLE: ROUND 2	04	82%	
RED CARD	23	80%	
RED DEAD REVOLVER	49	86%	
RED FACTION	11	88%	
RED FACTION 2	29	85%	
RED NINJA: END OF HONOUR	61	73%	
REIGN OF FIRE	30	71%	
RESIDENT EVIL 4	68	97%	
Beautiful, visceral, horrifying and absolutely essential. Get it.			
RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X	13	80%	
RESIDENT EVIL: DEAD AIM	37	68%	
RESIDENT EVIL SURVIVOR 2 CODE: VERONICA	20	41%	
RESIDENT EVIL OUTBREAK	45	86%	
RESIDENT EVIL OUTBREAK FILE 2	67	68%	
RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN OP. RESURRECTION	38	80%	
REZ	18	66%	
RIBBIT KING	55	22%	
RICHARD BURNS RALLY	51	66%	
RIDGE RACER 5	01	72%	
RIDING SPIRITS	27	46%	
RIDING SPIRITS 2	50	48%	
RING OF RED	10	74%	
RISE TO HONOUR	47	71%	
ROBOTECH: BATTLECRY	30	69%	
ROBOT WARS: ARENAS OF DESTRUCTION	16	63%	
ROADKILL	44	72%	
ROCKY	29	84%	
ROCKY LEGENDS	55	66%	
ROGUE GALAXY	73	91%	
Space piracy is the theme in yet another cracking RPG.			
ROLLERCOASTER WORLD	47	50%	
ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGS VIII	48	70%	
R: RACER EVOLUTION	45	37%	
RTX RED ROCK	38	55%	
RUGBY 2004	40	81%	
RUGBY 2005	63	61%	
RUGBY CHALLENGE 2006	70	64%	
RUMBLE RACING	10	76%	
RUMBLE ROSES	59	69%	
RUNE: VIKING WARLORD	13	56%	
RYGAR: THE LEGENDARY ADVENTURE	33	78%	
RYU GA GOTOKU	71	80%	
SAMURAI JACK: THE SHADOW OF AKU	51	59%	
SAMURAI WARRIORS	52	80%	
SAMURAI WARRIORS: XTREME LEGENDS	59	66%	
SAMURAI WESTERN	65	79%	
SAVAGE SKIES	34	67%	
S.C.A.R. – SQUADRA CORSE ALFA ROMEO	63	50%	
SCOOBY DOO: MYSTERY MAYHEM	49	51%	
SCRABBLE 2003 EDITION	40	64%	
SECOND SIGHT	53	90%	
Beautiful design and a truly novel take on the stealth genre.			
SECRET WEAPONS OVER NORMANDY	45	76%	
SEEK & DESTROY	39	69%	
SEGA BASS FISHING DUEL	33	55%	
SEGA CLASSICS COLLECTION	72	41%	
SEGA RALLY 2006	72	68%	
SEGA SUPERSTARS	56	80%	
SERIOUS SAM: NEXT ENCOUNTER	49	74%	
SHADOW HEARTS: COVENANT	60	84%	
SHADOW MAN: 2ECOND COMING	20	68%	
SHADOW OF MEMORIES	06	80%	
SHADOW OF ROME	58	85%	
SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS	69	91%	
Stab big monsters in one of PS2's most astonishing feats.			
SHADOW THE HEDGEHOG	70	60%	
SHARK TALE	55	29%	
SHELLSHOCK: NAM '67	51	71%	
SHIN MEGAMI TENSAI: LUCIFER'S CALL	64	85%	
SHINOBI	35	75%	
SHOX	28	61%	
SHREK 2	51	78%	
SHREK SUPER SLAM	70	70%	
SHOWDOWN: LEGENDS OF WRESTLING	50	72%	
SILENT HILL 2	15	88%	
SILENT HILL 3	36	87%	
SILENT HILL 4: THE ROOM	52	74%	
SILENT SCOPE 3	31	54%	
SILPHEED	03	51%	
SIMPSONS HIT AND RUN	42	77%	
SIMPSONS ROAD RAGE, THE	16	76%	
THE SIMS	31	85%	
THE SIMS 2	69	75%	
THE SIMS: BUSTIN' OUT	44	79%	
SINGSTAR	49	90%	
For people who don't like games. And for people who love games.			
SINGSTAR POPWORLD	62	70%	
SINGSTAR 80'S	68	81%	
SKY ODYSSEY	08	79%	
SLAM TENNIS	25	77%	
SLY RACCOON	31	80%	
SLY 2: BAND OF THIEVES	55	81%	
SLY 3: HONOUR AMONG THIEVES	69	87%	
SMASH CARS	39	54%	
SMASH COURT TENNIS: PRO TOURNAMENT 2	50	85%	
SMUGGLER'S RUN	03	75%	
SMUGGLER'S RUN 2: HOSTILE TERRITORY	17	77%	
SNIPER ELITE	67	80%	
SNK VS CAPCOM: SVC CHAOS	59	78%	
SOCOM: US NAVY SEALS	30	82%	
SOCOM 2: US NAVY SEALS	44	90%	
Immersive and dramatic – worth hooking up to broadband for.			
SOCOM 3: US NAVY SEALS	70	78%	
SOLDIER OF FORTUNE: GOLD EDITION	23	64%	
SONIC HEROES	46	66%	
SOUL CALIBUR 2	40	93%	
The very best fighter money can buy.			
SOUL CALIBUR III	69	89%	
SONIC MEGA COLLECTION PLUS	58	69%	
SONIC GEMS	68	55%	
SOUL REAVER 2	17	78%	
SPARTAN: TOTAL WARRIOR	67	88%	
SPAWN ARMAGEDDON	47	69%	
SPEED KINGS	37	55%	
SPHINX AND THE CURSED MUMMY	46	64%	
SPIDER-MAN: THE MOVIE	24	70%	
SPIDER-MAN 2	51	92%	
Best movie license ever. Best superhero game ever. Best *GTA* clone.			
SPINDRIVE PING PONG	62	32%	
SPLASHDOWN	16	75%	
SPLASHDOWN 2: RIDERS GONE WILD	40	75%	
SPLINTER CELL	34	91%	
The ultimate 'boys with toys' action adventure that's full of surprises.			
SPLINTER CELL: CHAOS THEORY	61	88%	
SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW	51	88%	
SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS MOVIE, THE	59	43%	
SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS: MOVIN' WITH FRIENDS	58	29%	
SPY FICTION	54	75%	
SPY HUNTER 2	46	67%	
SPYTOY	67	65%	
SPY VS. SPY	61	32%	
SPYRO: ENTER THE DRAGONFLY	30	68%	
SSX ON TOUR	68	83%	
SSX TRICKY	16	95%	
Edgy, funky, cool – compulsive gameplay and pure fun.			
SSX3	41	94%	
Makes you feel good about life. Responsive and thrilling.			
STAR OCEAN 3	55	85%	
STARSKY & HUTCH	38	77%	
STAR TREK VOYAGER: ELITE FORCE	23	75%	
STAR WARS: BATTLEFRONT	54	77%	
STAR WARS: BATTLEFRONT 2	69	80%	
STAR WARS: BOUNTY HUNTER	31	62%	
STAR WARS: EPISODE III REVENGE OF THE SITH	63	48%	
STAR WARS: JEDI STARFIGHTER	22	80%	
STAR WARS: STARFIGHTER	09	85%	
STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS	33	69%	
STATE OF EMERGENCY	20	75%	
STOLEN	62	38%	
STREET FIGHTER EX3	05	79%	
STREET RACING SYNDICATE	62	62%	
STUNT GP	16	38%	
STUNTMAN	26	74%	
SUFFERING, THE	48	86%	
SUFFERING 2: TIES THAT BIND	67	73%	
SUIKODEN 3	39	66%	
SUIKODEN IV	63	65%	
SUMMER HEAT BEACH VOLLEYBALL	39	56%	
SUMMONER	07	70%	
SUMMONER 2	29	73%	
SUM OF ALL FEARS, THE	29	57%	
SUPER BUST-A-MOVE	04	78%	
SUPERFARM	42	60%	
SUPERMAN: SHADOW OF APOKOLIPS	29	48%	
SUPER MONKEY BALL DELUXE	66	84%	
SWAT GLOBAL STRIKE TEAM	42	82%	
SWING AWAY GOLF	05	70%	
SX SUPERSTAR	38	53%	
SYPHON FILTER: THE OMEGA STRAIN	50	75%	
TAITO LEGENDS	68	45%	
TAITO LEGENDS 2	73	40%	
TAK 2: THE STAFF OF DREAMS	64	72%	
TAZ: WANTED	28	70%	
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES	47	56%	
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES 2: BATTLE NEXUS	58	23%	
TEKKEN 4	27	90%	
Way more of everything than the stopgap *Tournament* title. Brilliant.			
TEKKEN 5	61	91%	
And even better again – the ultimate *Tekken*.			
TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT	04	87%	
TENCHU: FATAL SHADOWS	63	68%	
TENCHU: WRATH OF HEAVEN	34	70%	
TERMINATOR: DAWN OF FATE	28	49%	
TERMINATOR 3: REDEMPTION	55	66%	
TEST DRIVE: OFFROAD WIDE OPEN	16	44%	
THEME PARK WORLD	05	68%	
THING, THE	27	83%	
THIS IS FOOTBALL 2004	47	75%	
THIS IS FOOTBALL 2005	56	68%	
THUNDERHAWK: OPERATION PHOENIX	14	70%	
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005	54	82%	
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2006	67	78%	
TIME CRISIS 2	16	78%	
TIMESPLITTERS 2	28	95%	
Stunning multi-player PLUS a massive single-player mode.			

MILF'S TOP FIVE

MILF LIKES BIG MONSTERS – AND THE ODD TRASHED CAR AS WELL...

1 RESIDENT EVIL 4

Gory as you like, but strangely beautiful with it, *Resi 4* is simply the most atmospheric experience you'll see on PS2.

2 METAL GEAR SOLID 3

Snake's third adventure is the most staggeringly immersive yet. Can't wait for *Metal Gear 4*, then. If only for the beard.

3 SHADOW O/T COLOSSUS

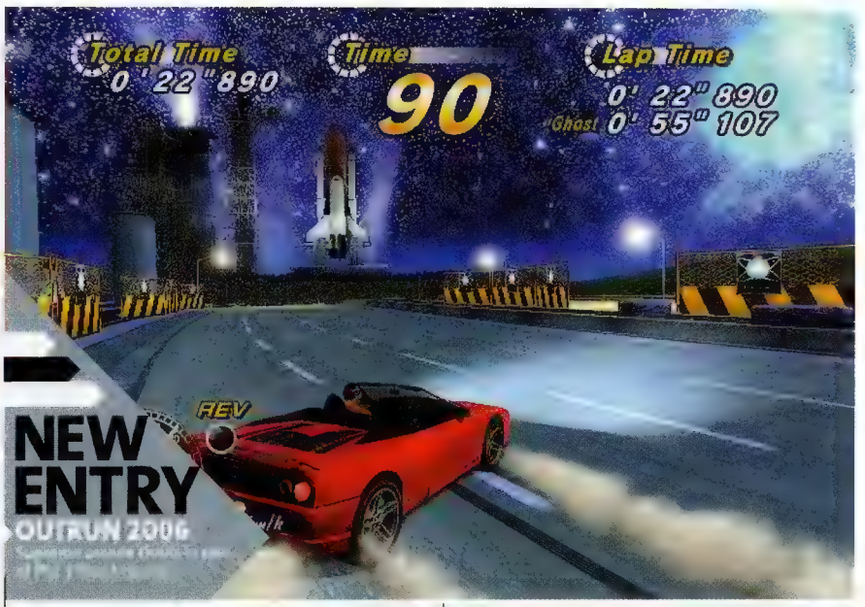
From start to finish, *Colossus* is absolutely gorgeous and utterly compulsive. The best eye candy on the console.

4 PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 5

Still the best game ever as far as multi-player thrills go. It never gets dull, and every match you get just a little bit better at it...

5 BURNOUT REVENGE

Flashy, smashy fun that lets you switch off your brain and just grin as shiny cars go flying all over the place. Absolutely skill.



NEW ENTRY

OUTRUN 2006

NEW ENTRY

BRONZE AWARD: A very enjoyable and solid game scoring 70-79%

SILVER AWARD: A top-notch PS2 title that scored between 80-89%

GOLD AWARD: A game scoring 90% or more. An absolute classic.

TOP FIVE

PSP GAMES

1. GTA: LIBERTY CITY STORIES
2. VIRTUA TENNIS WORLD TOUR
3. LUMINES
4. BURNOUT LEGENDS
5. OUTRUN 2006: COAST 2 COAST

ANIMALS

1. SLY RACCOON
2. DAXTER
3. DONALD DUCK
4. THE ANIMANIACS
5. HELLO KITTY

WAR GAMES

1. CALL OF DUTY 2
2. FSW: 10 HAMMERS
3. BROTHERS IN ARMS
4. CONFLICT: DESERT STORM 2
5. HEROES OF THE PACIFIC

PREDICTABLE GAME LOCATIONS

1. THE GHETTO (25 TO LIFE/50 CENT)
2. SEWERS (CONSTANTINE)
3. GRAVEYARDS (BLACK/RESI 4)
4. ICE WORLDS (ANY PLATFORMER)
5. WAREHOUSES (ALL FPS'S)

GAME NAME ISSUE	ISSUE	SCORE	AWARD
TIMESPLITTERS 3: FUTURE PERFECT	59	90%	
Now rather more soulless than before. Still superb, though.			
TOCA RACE DRIVER	26	82%	
TOCA RACE DRIVER 2	54	90%	
Tracks, cars and – vitally – racing are all super.			
TOCA RACE DRIVER 3	72	90%	
Just as superb as the last one. Vital for petrolheads.			
TOKYO ROAD RACE	36	45%	
TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS	38	58%	
TONY HAWK'S AMERICAN WASTELAND	68	86%	
TONY HAWKS UNDERGROUND 2	55	89%	
TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4	30	94%	
Lacks the impact of *THPS3*, but we suggest you get this version first.			
TOP GEAR DARE DEVIL	04	62%	
TOP GUN: COMBAT ZONE	16	67%	
TOP SPIN	68	61%	
TORINO '06: WINTER OLYMPIC GAMES	71	57%	
TOTAL CLUB MANAGER 2005	56	56%	
TOTAL IMMERSION RACING	31	74%	
TOTAL OVERDOSE	67	90%	
GTA in Mexico, basically, but with stacks of class. Terrific.			
TRANSFORMERS	49	84%	
TRAPT	73	39%	
TREASURE PLANET	29	75%	
TRIBES: AERIAL ASSAULT	37	74%	
TRUE CRIME	43	74%	
TRUE CRIME 2: NEW YORK CITY	70	71%	
TUROK EVOLUTION	27	71%	
TT SUPERBIKES	63	41%	
TWISTED METAL: BLACK	13	80%	
TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER 2	55	38%	
U MOVE SUPER SPORTS	57	63%	
UEFA CHALLENGE	12	56%	
UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2004-2005	59	62%	
UEFA EURO 2004	49	70%	
UFC: SUDDEN IMPACT	51	70%	
UFC: THROWDOWN	27	75%	
ULTIMATE SPIDER-MAN	68	79%	
UNDER THE SKIN	58	70%	
UNLIMITED SAGA	42	41%	
UNREAL TOURNAMENT	07	82%	
URBAN FREESTYLE SOCCER	45	72%	
URBAN REIGN	71	78%	
URBZ – SIMS IN THE CITY, THE	56	50%	
USA RACER	36	37%	
VAMPIRE NIGHTS	21	59%	
VAN HELSING	49	67%	
VIB RIPPLE	52	58%	
VICTORIOUS BOXERS	14	80%	
VIETCONG: PURPLE HAZE	54	71%	
VIEWTIFUL JOE	54	88%	
VIEWTIFUL JOE 2	58	85%	
VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 EVOLUTION	36	87%	
VIRTUAL-ON: MARZ	39	56%	
VIRTUA TENNIS 2	30	88%	
V-RALLY 3	24	81%	
WACKY RACES	11	63%	
WAKEBOARDING UNLEASHED: FT. SHAUN MURRAY	37	65%	
WALLACE AND GROMIT IN PROJECT ZOO	41	69%	
WALLACE AND GROMIT: CURSE O/T WERE-RABBIT	68	72%	
THE WARRIORS	68	87%	
WARHAMMER 40,000: FIRE WARRIOR	40	65%	
WAR OF THE MONSTERS	34	69%	
WAY OF THE SAMURAI	50	80%	
WDL THUNDER TANKS	06	69%	
WE LOVE KATAMARI	69	82%	
WHIPLASH	46	72%	
WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE 2	17	53%	
WILD ARMS 3	33	71%	
WILD WILD RACING	03	71%	
WINNING ELEVEN 9	66	91%	
As close to real football as you'll ever see on your PS2.			
WIPEOUT FUSION	19	73%	
WITHOUT WARNING	68	49%	
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER 2004	51	80%	
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP RUGBY	48	55%	
WORLD WAR ZERO: IRONSTORM	48	77%	
WORMS 3D	42	80%	
WORMS4: MAYHEM	64	47%	
WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP 4	55	87%	
WORLD SNOOKER CHAMPIONSHIP 2005	61	68%	
WRC: RALLY EVOLVED	68	89%	
WRECKLESS: THE YAKUZA MISSIONS	30	38%	
WWE SMACKDOWN! VS. RAW	56	85%	
WWE SMACKDOWN! VS. RAW 2006	69	83%	
WWF SMACKDOWN! JUST BRING IT	16	80%	
WORLD POKER TOUR	70	43%	
THE X-FACTOR SING	69	18%	
XGRA: EXTREME G	40	75%	
X-MEN LEGENDS 2: RISE OF APOCALYPSE	68	71%	
X-MEN: NEXT DIMENSION	31	67%	
X-MEN: WOLVERINE'S REVENGE	36	75%	
X SQUAD	06	59%	
YETISPORTS ARCTIC ADVENTURES	65	44%	
YU-GI-OH!: DUELLISTS OF THE ROSES	41	62%	
ZATHURA	73	26%	
ZOE 2: THE 2ND RUNNER	35	79%	

PSP REVIEWS

Every PSP game PSM2 has ever reviewed. Look! Down there!

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3

The PS2 heavyweight drops down to handheldweight, but remains great.

OUTRUN 2006

Sun, sea and beautiful ladies – the PSM2 journey to work is recreated on your PSP.

APE ACADEMY	66	85%	
BURNOUT LEGENDS	67	92%	
Like being smashed in the face in the best way possible. Stunning			
CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER	70	51%	
COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2005	66	84%	
CODED ARMS	67	52%	
THE CON	69	45%	
CRASH TAG TEAM RACING	70	65%	
DARKSTALKER CHRONICLES	66	74%	
DEATH JR	69	47%	
EVERYBODY'S GOLF	66	81%	
EXIT	72	84%	
F1 GRAND PRIX	66	71%	
FIFA 06	69	81%	
FIFA 2005	66	68%	
FIFA STREET 2	72	61%	
FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3	73	84%	
FIRED UP	66	54%	
FOOTBALL MANAGER HANDHELD	73	80%	
FRANTIX	70	20%	
FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE	73	60%	
GRAND THEFT AUTO: LIBERTY CITY STORIES	69	90%	
GTAIII Remixed, in essence, but still an absolute stormer of a game			
GHOST IN THE SHELL: STAND ALONE COMPLEX	70	50%	
GO! SUDOKU	70	60%	
GRIPSHIFT	70	78%	
HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE	70	51%	
INFECTED	71	77%	
KAO CHALLENGERS	70	69%	
KING KONG	71	56%	
KOLOOMN	73	78%	
LEMMINGS	72	78%	
LORD OF THE RINGS TACTICS	69	80%	
LUMINES	66	85%	
MADDEN NFL 06	72	71%	
MARVEL NEMESIS: RISE OF THE IMPERFECTS	70	58%	
ME & MY KATAMARI	73	81%	
MEDIEVIL RESURRECTION	66	67%	
METAL GEAR ACID	66	57%	
METAL GEAR ACID 2	72	80%	
MERCURY	67	85%	
MIDNIGHT CLUB 3	66	87%	
MIDWAY ARCADE TREASURES: EXTENDED PLAY	73	68%	
NAMCO BATTLE MUSEUM	70	54%	
NEED FOR SPEED: MOST WANTED	70	68%	
NBA LIVE 06	72	74%	
NBA STREET SHOWDOWN	66	80%	
NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND RIVALS	66	84%	
NFL STREET 2	66	72%	
OUTRUN 2006: COAST 2 COAST	73	88%	
PRINCE OF PERSIA: REVELATIONS	71	76%	
PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 5	69	80%	
PURSUIT FORCE	68	80%	
RIDGE RACER	66	88%	
THE SIMS 2	71	67%	
SOCOM US NAVY SEALS: FIRETEAM BRAVO	71	83%	
SPIDER-MAN 2	66	50%	
SMART BOMB	66	36%	
SSX ON TOUR	69	79%	
STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT 2	70	80%	
STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3 MAX	72	84%	
TALKMAN	72	79%	
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005	66	76%	
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2006	69	72%	
TOCA RACE DRIVER 2	66	79%	
TOKOBOT	71	65%	
TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2 REMIX	66	81%	
UNTOLD LEGENDS: BROTHERHOOD OF THE BLADE	66	66%	
VIRTUA TENNIS WORLD TOUR	66	91%	
A 'must have' title. The best sports sim on PSP.			
WINNING ELEVEN 9	68	79%	
WIPEOUT PURE	66	84%	
WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP	66	80%	
WORLD SNOOKER CHALLENGE 2005	67	70%	
WORLD TOUR SOCCER	68	73%	
WORMS: OPEN WARFARE	73	63%	
WWE SMACKDOWN! VS RAW 2006	70	85%	

KOLOOMN

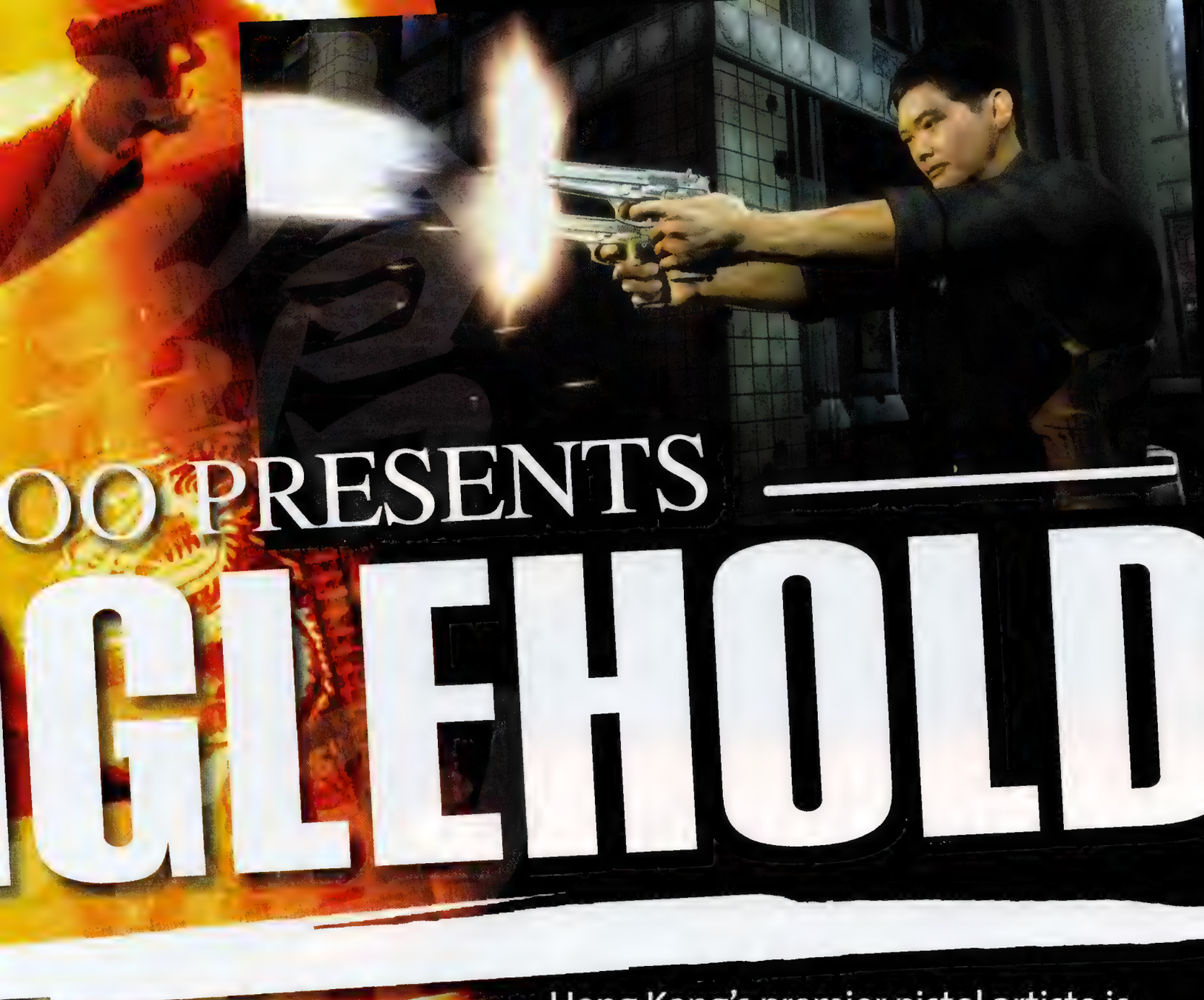
Another good puzzler. If only certain other genres were as well-represented on PSP.

ME & MY KATAMARI

The PSP debut of gaming's premiere 'roll things into a ball and stick them in space-'em-up'.

BRONZE AWARD: A very enjoyable and solid game scoring 70-79% | SILVER AWARD: A top-notch PS2 title that scored between 80-89% | GOLD AWARD: A game scoring 90% or more. An absolute classic.

銃神
JOHN W
STRAD



OO PRESENTS
GLEHOLD

Hong Kong's premier pistol artiste is coming to PS3! All together... Woooo!

It's easy to forget that there was a time when heroes stood still in gunfights. A time when they only used one gun. A time when shotgun blasts just made people fall over, instead of blowing them across the room like the breath of an angry god. A time, unthinkably, when people fired six shots *and then reloaded*, instead of whanging two-hundred bullets out of a matching set of Berettas, then slinging them away and pulling *another* pair out of their trousers. The man who changed all that, of course, was John Woo. And he's coming to PS3. And he's bringing his best mate too.

Stranglehold's the first of a projected series of next-gen Woo projects. Billed as the spiritual sequel to Hard Boiled – the action maestro's last Hong Kong-based film – it'll see long-term Woo collaborator Chow-Yun Fat revisit his role as Tequila Yuen, the long-suffering supercop from the film. This time he's splitting his time between Hong Kong and Chicago, battling Hong Kong crime lords until his wife's kidnapped by the Russian mob. This is classic Woo stuff – conflicts between duty and family, glamorous location-hopping... and shooting. Loads and loads of shooting until everyone in sight is dead.

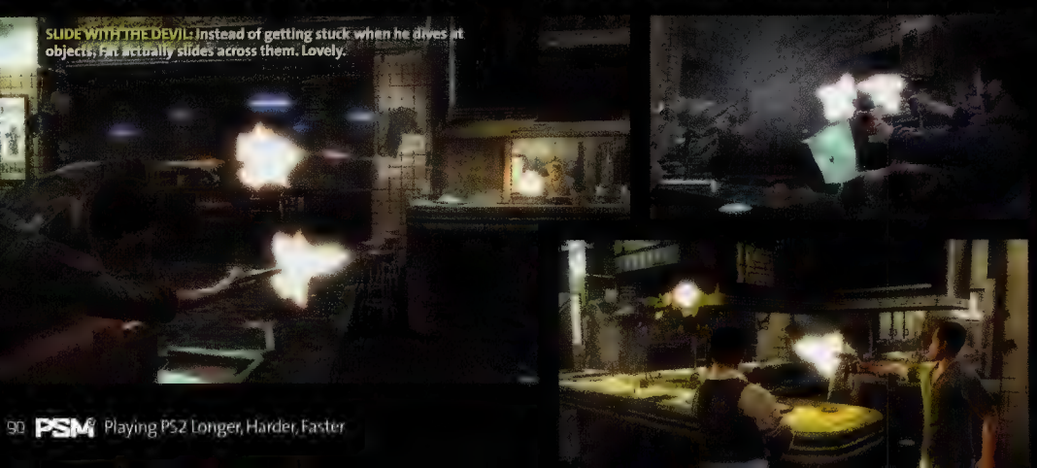
"INSTEAD OF BULLET TIME, YOU'LL SEE TEQUILA TIME, WHICH OFFERS MORE PRECISION AIMING"

Of course, with every game since *Max Payne* aping Woo's classic dive-and-shoot gun battles – Payne even references his films directly in a couple of conversations – *Stranglehold*'s going to have to up the ante to be worthy of interest. So instead of bullet time you'll be seeing Tequila Time, a variation on the traditional slow-mo diving that offers more precision aiming in the air – and not, say, another word for happy hour. There'll also be Massive Destructibility – Midway are so proud of it they've actually trademarked the term 'Massive D'

"THE ENVIRONMENTS ARE FULLY DESTRUCTIBLE; EVERYTHING WILL SHATTER UNDER THE GUNFIRE"

LET IT SLIDE: Even if we tried this on the seat of our pants, we'd overbalance and shoot ourselves through the temple...

– representing the idea that you'll be able to destroy literally anything in a level (thus giving birth to the phrase 'look at the Massive D's on that'). Midway Chicago – the people who last made the excellent *Psi-Ops* – are using the Unreal 3.0 engine and the latest version of Havok physics to create massively destructible environments. Not only will every glass window, glass cabinet and glass-topped coffee table shatter under your deluge of bullets, but the shards will actually stay on the floor, providing a sparkly carpet to dance across as you murder dozens of mobsters. Inspector Tequila's more athletic than your typical hero, too – though he's perfectly competent at leaping forwards, backwards and sideways while he shoots, he can also run up stairway banisters, slide across tables, leap onto dessert trolleys and swing from chandeliers. Advanced Fat-fans will also see moves like the rolling shin-shot – Fat's way of staying close to the ground – as well as a flick-up onto his feet. Apart from coming up with the storyline, you'll also see Woo's influence in the camera placement, action direction and cut-scenes. That'll mean copious amounts of slow-mo, but it should also lend itself to gameplay – Hard Boiled's infamous for including a huge continuous tracking shot in the closing hospital shootout. Can John-boy do for next-generation games what he did for action flicks? Woo knows...

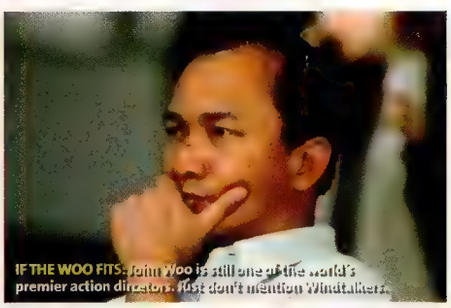


SLIDE WITH THE DEVIL: Instead of getting stuck when he dives at objects, Fat actually slides across them. Lovely.

WOO-HOO!

Never heard of Hong Kong's favourite action-meister? Pepper your conversation with these fact-bullets, and no-one need ever know.

- John's favourite film is the Wizard Of Oz, which he says 'showed me that the world is not just full of violence and suffering.' It's referenced in Face/Off, where Somewhere Over The Rainbow plays during a gigantic gun battle.
- He's already working on two videogame-to-film conversions – a version of Nintendo's *Metroid*, and an adaptation of *Spy Hunter* starring – erk – The Rock.
- He's also working on He-Man And The Masters Of The Universe, with Haydn 'Anakin' Christiansen tipped to play.



IF THE WOO FITS: John Woo is still one of the world's premier action directors. Just don't mention Windtalkers.

ROCKET MAN: Fat's openly contemptuous of rocket launchers, preferring to wield a brace of Berettas. They're classier, see.

LEE ME ALONE: Commander Lee makes his return from Boiled.

"EVERYONE WANTS TO SHOOT BABIES"

We talked to Brian Eddie, lead developer on Stranglehold, and known for his work on telekinesis-based shooter, Psi-Ops.

With so many games like *Max Payne* and *Total Overdose* stealing ideas from John Woo, are you worried about standing out?
Not really. All these other games took a little bit of what John Woo was trying to do, like with slow-mo, but they didn't really get it completely. We're taking stuff like *Max Payne* and moving it up a couple of notches, allowing you to interact with the world in all sorts of ways.

What sort of involvement has John Woo had in the game?
Well, he doesn't really know games – that's why he came to us. But he definitely knows his cinematic style, and he's also been really involved with the storyline. He'll throw out ideas about his vision, and we'll try to translate that into a game.

Are there scenes that'll be familiar to John Woo fans from his other films?
Yeah, there are definitely scenes that fans'll recognise, but I don't want to get into that.

How extensive is the game's destructibility going to be?
Well, our goal is to have every surface affected in some way. It's great, after the battle's done, looking around the room. Or drawing your initials in a wall.

Have you seen *Black*?
Yeah, I think some of their destructibility's more repetitive than ours because we have more memory to work with, but I think they did a really good job.

Can we talk about the multi-player modes?
Yeah, we're looking at eight-player multi-player and Capture The Flag, but we're also looking at modes that are specific to features like the slow-mo. We'd like to have co-op too, but I can't promise that.

What about the vehicles?
There's a lot of water in Hong Kong, so we've got boats. There are many routes, so you could take off on a motorbike or a 4x4.

Finally – is there a scene where you carry a baby around?
I dunno – we might leave that in Hard Boiled. Babies are always hard to carry off in gun games... everyone wants to shoot them.

WOO FOR TWO

Midway have confirmed that *Stranglehold* will be online, but haven't said how it's going to work.

SWING OUT, MISTER: Sadly, you can only shoot one-handed while you're dangling from the chandeliers. Still, eh?

NIGHT ON THE TILES: After hectic gunfights, whole environments will be on the brink of collapse.

BEEN AND GUN

There are about twelve varieties of gun in the game – Tequila specialises in handguns, but there are AKs and machine guns as well.

FAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

Only know Hong Kong's premier pistolier from Crouching Tiger and Anna And The King? Get up to speed with a quick trip to the rental shop. Don't forget to

HARD BOILED

Chow Yun Fat out-guns Die Hard in what's regarded as his best collaboration with Woo. The closing gun battle lasts sixty plaster-splintering minutes, and climaxes in Chow Yun Fat getting his trousers set on fire – then being put out by the baby he's carrying wetting itself. True.

A BETTER TOMORROW 2

Sixty minutes of agonising method acting – Fat goes a bit blubbery after his daughter dies and he's committed to a psychiatric ward – set the stage for half an hour of relentless shootage, including the point-blank gun duel Alabama watches on TV in True Romance.

TIGER ON THE BEAT

Fat sends up his toothpick-chewing ice-cold cop persona as part of a family of stuntmen, swigging a glassful of raw eggs and wetting himself when people pull guns on him. Also worth watching for the insane chainsaw duel at the end, although Fat isn't actually in that bit.

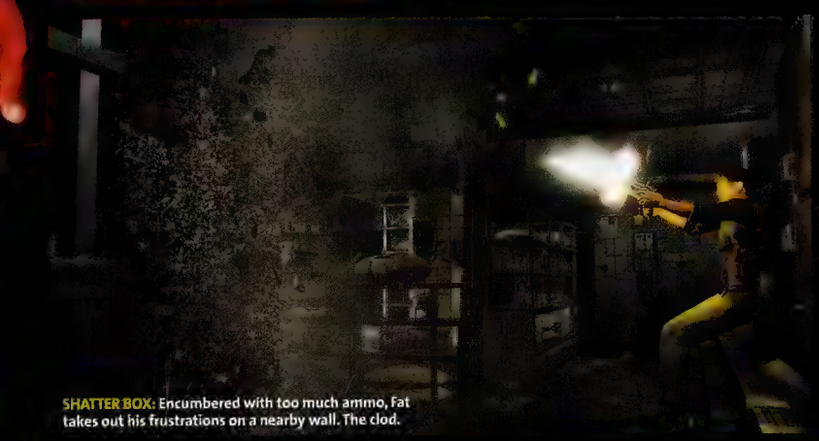
GOD OF GAMBLERS

With a plot almost entirely nicked from Rain Man – top gambler Fat regresses to a state of childlike amnesia after a crack on the head – Gamblers started a whole new vogue for 'stylish gambling thrillers' in Hong Kong.

THE KILLER

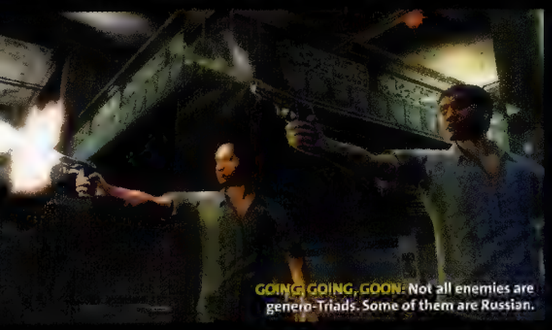
The archetypal one-last-job flick sees hitman Fat taking on a final hit to pay for an operation for a girl he's accidentally blinded – then getting on the bad side of a cop and killing about three hundred people in a church. Also features the most depressing ending since Watership Down.

BOILED IN THE BAG: Woo-lovers will recognise this bit from Hard Boiled. It's the old dropping-to-the-floor duel.



SHATTER BOX: Encumbered with too much ammo, Fat takes out his frustrations on a nearby wall. The clod.

FAT'S ALL, FOLKS! Fat's present as his facially-puddgy current self, rather than his chiselled younger Boiled-ego.



GOING, GOING, GOON: Not all enemies are generic Triads. Some of them are Russian.

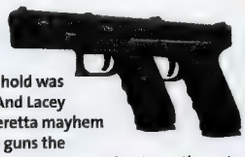
SWING SOMETHING SIMPLE: You have to wonder how he's going to get down from here.

WOO GOES THERE?

Not sure if you're watching a John Woo film, or one of his inferior imitators' efforts? Just check it against the following list – if it contains three or more of the following, there's a 90% chance it's been touched by the hand of Woo.*

鐘神 TWIN HANDGUNS

Ubiquitous now, but there was a time when the most guns anyone could conceivably hold was *one*, held in the classic Cagney And Lacey double-grip. The Killer's twin-beretta mayhem changed all that and made two guns the standard. Note: films such as Versus are now trying to up the ante to *three* guns, including one in the mouth. This is stupid.



鐘神 MEXICAN STANDOFFS

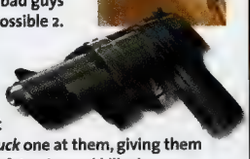
Before Reservoir Dogs, John-boy pioneered the art of twitchy men aiming guns at each other in virtually all of his films, from po-faced 'Nam flick Bullet In The Head to the nickname swapping hilarity of The Killer.

鐘神 DOVES

John's love of peace-promoting birds kicked off with The Killer, and now he jams them into virtually every film he directs, regardless of whether it makes sense or not – such as when they turn up in the bad guys' *underground base* in Mission: Impossible 2.

鐘神 CHUCKING GUNS ABOUT

If a Woo protagonist finds themselves without a gun, it's inevitable that their mate's about to dash around the corner and *chuck* one at them, giving them *just* enough time to flick off the safety, aim and kill whoever they're facing off with. If they haven't got any mates, they'll just stamp on a table to flick a piece into their hands.



鐘神 FAKE INJURIES

It's not uncommon for characters in Woo films to pretend they're crippled so they can surprise the bad guys. Witness one of Once A Thief's cast spilling beer to convince the bad lads that he can't pull a trigger with his left hand. Before he shoots them all.

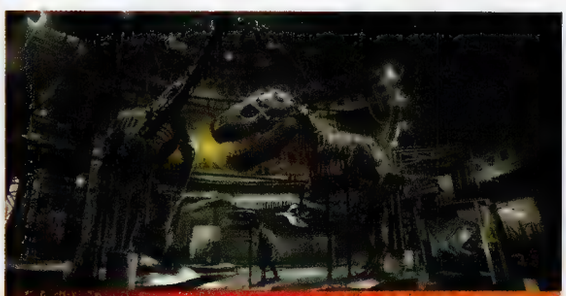
BLOODY HELL

Among the sea of supposedly violent action cinema, John Woo films are known as 'gun operas' – the bits where everyone gets shot creatively acting like arias from the more traditional fat-lady-singing style of opera. It's nice to see that Midway Chicago haven't skimped on the claret, with Chow Yun-Fat getting stabbed up as the game goes on.

"MIDWAY HAVEN'T SKIMPED ON THE CLARET AND THE GAME GETS BLOODIER AS IT GOES ON"

SMASH IT UP

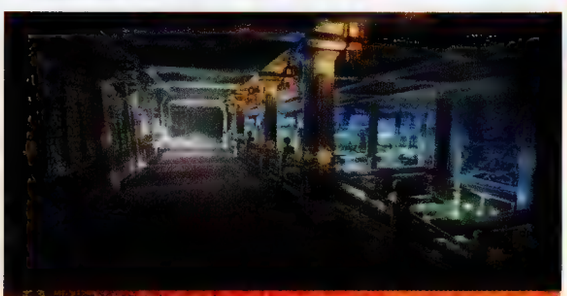
Among the other buzzwords, we're promised 'rock and roll' destruct-o-physics – using the power of PS3 to make every environment collapse and crumble – and they've picked locations to maximise the game's destructive side.



MUSEUMS! Shatter dino-bones into Jurassic [illegible] and watch the [illegible] palaeontologists blubber. Bonus points if we can sprint up a brontosaurus' spine.

CASINOS! Fruit machines and craps tables [illegible] when Fat comes to town. Always bet on red, that's our advice.

BIG GLASS BUILDINGS! Gangster bosses – [illegible] own good. Several hundred bullets later, not even the stairs are left standing.



TEA HOUSES! Echoing the classic scene from The Killer, Fat [illegible] in an orgy of bullet-on-china destruction. Tinkle!

PlayStation.2

"As good as it gets.
Savour every hour."
9/10 Official PlayStation 2 Magazine

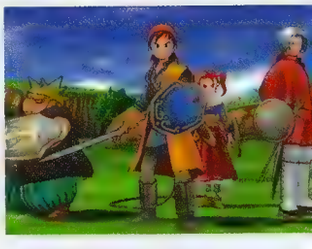
SOME PETS WILL DO ANYTHING FOR ATTENTION

DRAGON QUEST™

The Journey of the Cursed King

www.dragonquest.eu.com

Why is it that you barely notice your dog these days?



It's the incredible world of DRAGON QUEST, with its lively towns, open spaces and treacherous dungeons. As monsters follow your every step, learn incredible spells and skills to help you in your mission to lift an evil curse from the Kingdom of Trodain. Marvel at the unique character design from the legendary Akira Toriyama (creator of Dragon Ball®) and immerse yourself into the story where a wealth of rewards and side quests await!

A huge new world is yours to explore - once you enter nothing else matters, not even your dog.

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PS2 / PSP tips

Pro-Tips

TRAINING YOU IN THE DARK ARTS OF PLAYSTATION

If you're stuck with your games, and it don't look good – who ya gonna call? Er, us, perhaps?

01 BLACK

BFG (M249 SAW) IN CITY STREETS LEVEL

Enter '5SQQ-5THA-ZFFV-7XEV' as a profile name. If you entered the code correctly, you will be able to re-enter an actual profile name after selecting 'Done'. When you begin the first level, you will have the BFG weapon. Note: Make sure to include the '-' symbol when entering the code (located next to the '!' symbol).

SILVER WEAPONS

Successfully complete the game on the Normal or Hard difficulty setting to unlock silver weapons with infinite ammunition for that difficulty and any lower difficulty setting(s). Note: This does not include the Black Ops difficulty setting. You will always have silver weapons on that difficulty setting.

M16A2

Successfully complete the game on the Black Ops difficulty setting to unlock the M16A2 (M16 with grenade launcher) for use on any difficulty setting.

BLACK OPS MODE

Successfully complete the game on the Hard difficulty setting to unlock the Black Ops difficulty setting.

02 FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3

BONUS VENUES

Win a match at one of the corresponding venues in Career mode to unlock it:
Madison Square Garden
The Staples Center

BOX AS KO REY MO

Defeat Ko Rey Mo in light heavy division in Career mode.

BURGER KING TRAINER

Win the Burger King event in Career mode. Then head to the trainer selection screen and keep pressing ↓ until the Burger King eventually appears as a choice. He gives you Heart when you fight.

BOXING STYLES

Win matches in ESPN Classic Fights mode or Career mode to unlock various new styles, at random:
Hard Straights
Hook Master
Judge Jab
Lethal Uppercuts

PS2 TIP

1 MEGAMAN: POWERED UP

PLAY AS BLUES/PROTOMAN

Successfully complete all 100 challenges in Challenge mode to unlock Blues/Protoman.

PLAY AS BOSSES

Defeat a Robot Master in New Style mode using only the Mega Buster or Rock Buster to unlock that Boss as a playable character.

CHARGE SHOT/SLIDING MOVE

Successfully complete the entire game on the Normal difficulty setting to unlock the Charge Shot/Sliding move.

TIPS ROUND-UP

NEED FOR SPEED MOST WANTED

ONE STOP SHOP MARKER

At the Press Start screen, press ↑, ↑, ↓, ↓, ←, →, ↑, ↓ to unlock a special marker for the Junkman Engine part in the back room of the One Stop Shop in Career mode. Note: This code can only be enabled once per career.

BURGER KING CHALLENGE

At the Press Start screen, press ↑, ↓, ↑, ↓, ←, →, ←, →. If you entered the code correctly, a message will appear stating that you have unlocked a "Special Challenge Event" will appear. At the main menu, select the Challenge Series option. Scroll all the way to the bottom and choose #59, the Burger King Challenge. Complete the challenge to be able to use all Junkman parts on cars you have in 'My Cars'.

CASTROL SYNTEC FORD GT

At the 'Press Start' screen, press ←, →, ←, →, ↑, ↓, ↑, ↓ to unlock the Castrol Syntec Ford GT.

PORSCHE CAYMAN

At the Press Start screen, press L1, R1(x3), →, ←, →, ↓ to unlock this car.

GAIN $10,000

Have a saved game file from *Need For Speed: Underground 2* on your memory card to get an extra $10,000 in Career mode after the prologue.

CONFLICT: GLOBAL STORM

CHEAT MODE

At the main menu, press L1, R1, L1, R1, ○(4) to unlock the cheat menu.

EXTREME MODE

Successfully complete the game on the Normal or Hard difficulty setting to unlock the Extreme difficulty setting.

DEVIL MAY CRY 3

CHEAT MODE

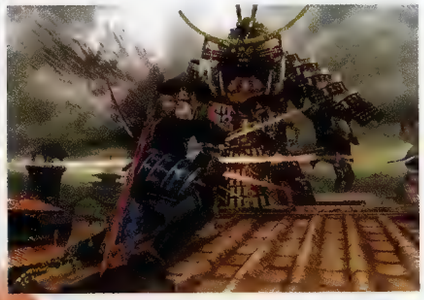
At the starting menu, hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 and rotate the left stick until "Devil May Cry!" is spoken. This will unlock all bonus modes, alternate costumes, and gallery entries.

ALTERNATE COSTUMES

Complete the game on the easy or higher difficulty setting to unlock shirtless Philly Shell
Sinister Cross
Slickster
Smooth
Textbook
Uptight

EASY WINS IN CAREER MODE

Go to the options menu and set 'Illegal Blows' to 'Off'. Then, go to the fight store and buy the illegal head punch called 'Elbow Shot'. During a fight, use the Elbow Shot to counter-attack each time your opponent throws a punch. Note: Make sure you use the Elbow Shot as a counter-attack so that you can connect cleanly and powerfully on you opponent's head. You will see that the Elbow Shot inflicts a lot of damage to him, and will either KO him in a very short period of time, or deal a TKO because you inflicted so much damage to his eyes.



03 ONIMUSHA: DAWN OF DREAMS

TWO-PLAYER MODE

At the title screen, hold L2 + R1 on controllers one and two and press START on controller two. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a sound.

HARD MODE

Successfully complete the game on the Normal difficulty setting to unlock the Hard difficulty setting.

ONI MODE

Successfully complete the game on the Hard difficulty setting to unlock the Oni difficulty setting.

ULTIMATE ONI MODE

Successfully complete the game on the Oni difficulty setting to unlock the Ultimate Oni difficulty setting.

ALTERNATE COSTUMES

Successfully complete the Test Of Valor to unlock alternate costumes. Additional costumes will be unlocked if the Test Of Valor is completed with all 'Gold' ranks.

04 FIFA STREET 2

100,000,000 SB

Enter ↑, ↑, ↓, □, ○, □, ○ at the password menu. Now how massively unfair is that?

05 SEGA CLASSICS COLLECTION

CONTROL MUSIC SELECTION SCREEN IN OUTRUN

Use the following actions at the 'Select Music By Steering' menus. Hold L1 and press ←, →, ↑, or ↓ to move the camera's position. Hold L2 and press ←, →, ↑, or ↓ to pan or rotate the camera's view.

ENABLE SHADOWS IN SPACE HARRIER

First, disable the 'Fractal' option at the options menu. Then at the Space Harrier title screen, press →, ←, ↓, ↑. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a sound.

BONUS CARS IN VIRTUA RACING

70's F-1 (Acceleration): Successfully complete a set after earning at least 51 possession points.
Prototype (Max Speed): Successfully complete a set after earning at least 121 possession points.
Coupe (Drift): Successfully complete a set after earning at least 181 possession points.
Classic (Handling): Successfully complete a set after earning at least 251 possession points.

TIPS ROUND-UP

Dante; on the normal or higher difficulty setting to unlock the original *Devil May Cry* Dante; and on the hard difficulty setting to unlock the shirtless original *Devil May Cry* Dante. Press L1 or R1 at the mission selection screen to choose the new costume. Note: The costumes will also unlock the Force Edge Devil Arms move.

THE GETAWAY: BLACK MONDAY

DOUBLE HEALTH
During the opening introduction before the main menu appears, press ↑(2), ←(2), →(2), ◎(2), ↓. If you entered the code correctly, the screen will flash green. Repeat the code to disable its effect.

ALL GUNS SILENCED
During the opening introduction before the main menu appears, press ↑, ↓, ←, →, △, ↑, ↓, ←, →, Square. If you entered the code correctly, the screen will flash green. Repeat the code to disable its effect.

SPECIAL VISUAL EFFECTS
Successfully complete the game. Then during the opening introduction before the main menu appears, press □, △, →, ◎, ←, ←. If you entered the code correctly, the screen will flash green. Repeat the code to disable its effect.

MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION

ALL CITIES IN ARCADE MODE
Enter the options screen and select the Cheats option. Enter 'roadtrip' or 'crosscountry' at the cheat menu to unlock all cities in arcade mode.

INCREASE CAR MASS IN ARCADE MODE
Enter the options screen and select the 'Cheats' option. Enter 'hyperagro' at the cheat menu.

NO DAMAGE
Enter the options screen and select the 'Cheats' option. Enter 'ontheroad' at the cheat menu.

FASTER PEDESTRIANS
Enter the options screen and select the 'Cheats' option. Enter 'urbansprawl' at the cheat menu. Note: This code also unlocks all cities in arcade mode.

ARGO SPECIAL MOVE
Enter the options screen and select the 'Cheats' option. Enter 'dfens' at the cheat menu to unlock the Argo special move.

ROAR SPECIAL MOVE
Enter the options screen and select the 'Cheats' option. Enter 'Rjnr' at the cheat menu to unlock the Roar special move.

ZONE SPECIAL MOVE
Enter the options screen and select the 'Cheats' option. Enter 'allin' at the cheat menu to unlock the Zone special move.

PRO TIP

2 STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT 2

INVINCIBILITY
Pause the game in Story, Instant Action or Galactic Conquest mode and press ↑(3), ←, ↓(3), ←, ↑(3), ←, →. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a sound. Repeat the code to disable its effect.

INFINITE AMMUNITION
Pause the game in Story, Instant Action, or Galactic Conquest mode and press ↑, ↓, ←, ↓(2), ←, ↓(2), ←, ↓(3), ←, →. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a sound. Repeat the code to disable its effect. Note: Your ammunition will decrease, but will refill instantly after reloading.

LOW RESOLUTION SOLDIERS
Pause the game in Story, Instant Action, or Galactic Conquest mode and press ↓(3), ↑(2), ←, ↓(5), ←, ↑(3), ←. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a sound. Repeat the code to disable its effect.

CAPTIONS WHEN REBELS KILLED BY WAMPAS
Pause the game in Story, Instant Action, or Galactic Conquest mode and press ↑, ↓, ←, ↓, ←, →. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a sound. Repeat the code to disable its effect.

SLOW MOTION SOUNDS
Pause the game in Story, Instant Action, or Galactic Conquest mode and press ↑(3), ←, ↑, ↓, ↑(2), ←, ↓(3), ←, ↑, ↓(2), ←, →. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a sound. Repeat the code to disable its effect.

DISABLE HUD
Pause the game in Story, Instant Action or Galactic Conquest mode and press ↑(4), ←, ↑(2), ↓, ←, ↓, ↑(2), ←, →. Repeat the code to disable its effect.

06 ROGUE GALAXY

GHOST SHIP
Successfully complete the game and save when prompted. Then, load the cleared saved game file to now access the Ghost Ship on the Galaxy map.

GHOST SHIP EXTREME LEVEL
Answer all the Seventh Mystery questions in the Ghost Ship to get the Key Of The Underworld.

07 PROJECT ZERO 3: THE TORMENTED

ALTERNATE ENDING
During Chapter 10, after you have taken the picture of the well, go to the corridor with the three stairs and push the shelf at the end to access the door. Walk across the roof to the other end and pick up the diary on the floor. Quickly turn around for a picture of the 'crying woman' behind you. Examine the shelf nearby for a Type-00 film. Examine the trapdoor to open it and go down the ladder. You will encounter the 'flying woman' in the sunken fireplace area where you first fought the 'mother and daughter' as Rei. After the battle, you will get a 'Leaf Key' and the '[Penetrate] Lens'. Return to the Kimono room to unlock the drawer of the dressing table, where you will get a diary, a photo of a man who looked like Kei and, finally, an earring. Successfully complete the game to view the alternate ending. Note: The alternate ending only appears during the credits as static pictures.

08 APE ESCAPE 3

CHEAT MODE
At the title screen, press START, then hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 and press START again to display the Secret Password entry screen. Then enter one of the following passwords to activate the corresponding cheat function.

MESAL GEAR (MESARU GEAR) SOLID SCENES IN MOVIE 28 AND LAST TWO SIMIAN CINEMA MOVIES
Enter '2 snakes' as a password.

BLUE PIPOTRON APE
Enter 'coolblue; as a password. Blue Pipotron Ape is on the wings of the jet in the Flying High Monkey level. Exit the yellow plane and he will appear in front of you.

DARK MASTER APE
Enter 'blackout' as a password. Dark Master will appear in the Kung Fu Alley level. Enter the construction area and find the small room with a Kung-Fu switch.

RED PIPOTRON APE
Enter 'redmon"'as a password. Red Pipotron Ape is in the Toy Room With Blocks in the Let's Go Out With The Monkeys level.

SAL-1000 APE
Enter 'grobyc' as a password. SAL-1000 Ape is near the clock tower in the Castle level. Look in the area with the second exit in the hidden dressing room that leads to Saru-mon's Immobile Castle.

SAL-3000 APE
Enter 'SAL3000' as a password. SAL-3000 Ape is in a dressing room in the Space TV Fortress level. Search the vending machine area which second exit in hidden dressing room that leads to the Gotta Love Specter level. Hit the number '5' to find him.

SHIMMY APE
Enter '2nd man' as a password. Shimmy Ape is hidden past the back door the icy hideout (Piposaru costume area) in the Winterville level.

SPORK APE
Enter 'krops' as a password. Spork Ape will appear in a cabin at the Hide-n-Seek Forest level.

YELLOW PIPOTRON APE
Enter 'yellowy' as a password. Yellow Pipotron Ape is in the first area in the Monkey Come, Monkey Go level.

09 NAMCO MUSEUM 50TH ANNIVERSARY

GALAGA '88
Score 40,000 points in one session of *Galaga* using the default game settings to unlock *Galaga '88*.

PAC-MANIA
Score 15,000 points in one session of *Pac-Man* and 20,000 points in one session of *Ms. Pac-Man* using the default game settings to unlock *Pac-Mania*.

10 TOCA RACE DRIVER 3

BOOST
While choosing an area selection at the map screen, hold SELECT. Release it when the auto-pilot engages. Start a race, and you will be able to use a boost. Note: This can only be done with cars that do not already have a turbo.

FOGGY WEATHER
Select time attack, free run, or vs. battle mode and choose rain. While you are selecting the track starting point, hold L2 to make it foggy.

SNOWY WEATHER
Select time attack, free run, or vs. battle mode and choose rain. While you are selecting the track starting point, hold L1 to make it snow.

STORMY WEATHER
Select time attack, free run, or vs. battle mode and choose rain. While you are selecting the track starting point, hold R2 to make it thunder.

SWITCH ENGINES
Get over 1242.8 miles (2000 km) on the odometer on a car to unlock the ability to switch engines on that specific car. Successfully complete 100% of the game to switch the engine of any car.

Pro-Tips

TRAINING YOU IN THE DARK ARTS OF PLAYSTATION

3 DEATH JR

INVINCIBILITY
Pause the game, then hold L1 and press ↑(2), ↓(2), ←(2), →(2), □, △. If you entered the code correctly, 'Can't Touch This' will appear.

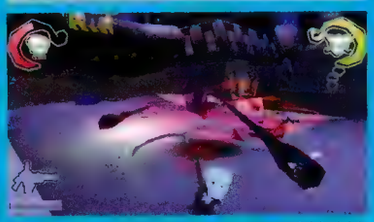
ALL WEAPON UPGRADES
Pause the game, then hold L1 and press ↑(2), ↓(2), ←, →, ←, →, ⊗, ○.

REFILL AMMUNITION
Pause the game, then hold L1 and press △(2), ⊗(2), □, ○, □, ○, ↓, →.

INFINITE AMMUNITION
Pause the game, then hold L1 and press △(2), ⊗(2), □, ○, □, ○, →, ↓.

INCREASED TOTAL HEALTH
Pause the game, then hold L1 and press ↑(2), ↓(2), ⊗, ○, △, □, ⊗(2).

INCREASED ASSIST STOCKS



Pause the game, then hold L1 and press ↑(2), ↓(2), ↑, →, ↓, ←, ⊗(2).

EXTRA WEAPON WIDGET
Pause the game, then hold L1 and press →, ↑, ↓, ↑, △, ↑, ←, □, △, →.

DISABLE GATES
Pause the game, then hold L1 and press ↑, ←, ↓, →, ←, △, □, ⊗, ○, □.

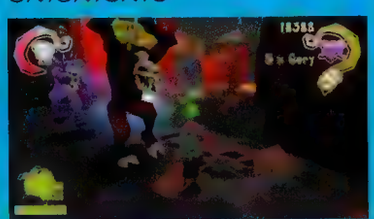
EXTRA VIOLENT KILLS
Pause the game, then hold L1 and press Circle, ←, X, ↑, □, →, △, ↓, X, ↑.

BIG HEAD MODE
Pause the game, then hold L1 and press △, □, ⊗, □, △, ↑, →, ↓, ←, ↑.

BIG SCYTHE MODE
Pause the game, then hold L1 and press △, □, ⊗, ○, △, ↑, ←, ↓, →, ↑.

CRAZY SCYTHE TRAILS
Pause the game, then hold L1 and press △, ↑, ○, →, ⊗, ↓, □, ←, △, ↑.

RANDOM COLOUR SCYTHE TRAILS
Pause the game, then hold L1 and press ↓, ⊗, ↓, ⊗, ↓, ⊗, ↓, ⊗, ↓, ⊗.



QUICK START
When entering a race at any time and the clock is ticking down, when it reaches '1', press R2 and punch the gas. You will take a fast lead against any other racer in the challenge. Note: After the race is over you will need to go to the garage to cool the engine down. This extra turbo boost heats the engine faster. Use this trick wisely.

11 MARC ECKO'S GETTING UP: CONTENTS UNDER PRESSURE

CHEAT MODE
At the Game Information screen, select Options, then choose the Codes selection. Enter one of the following codes to activate the corresponding cheat function. Enter the code again to disable its effect.

LEVEL SELECT
Enter 'IPULATOR' as a code to unlock all levels.

MAXIMUM HEALTH
Enter 'BABYLONTRUST' as a code.

INFINITE HEALTH
Enter 'MARCUSECKOS' as a code.

MAXIMUM SKILLS
Enter 'VANCEDALLISTER' as a code.

INFINITE SKILLS
Enter 'FLIPTHESCRIPT' as a code.

ALL COMBAT UPGRADES
Enter 'DOGTAGS' as a code.

ALL CHARACTERS
Enter 'STATEYOURNAME' as a code to unlock all characters.

ALL LEGENDS
Enter 'NINESIX' as a code to unlock all legends.

ALL BLACK BOOK GRAFFITI AND TRUTH PIECES
Enter 'SHARDSOFGLASS' as a code to unlock all Black Book graffiti and Truth Pieces. The Truth Pieces are a Throw-Up and a Wheat-Paste Piece.

ALL BEAT DOWN ARENAS
Enter 'WORKBITCHES' as a code to unlock all beat down arenas.

ALL IPOD SONGS
Enter 'GRANDMACELIA' as a code to unlock all iPod songs.

ALL ART
Enter 'SIRULLY' as a code to unlock all art.

PSM2 MICRO GUIDE

All the hardest bits [illegible] in one handy eyeful

THIS MONTH: BLACK

THE TOUGHEST BITS EXPLODED!

VERKENSK CITY STREET

Keep the car moving as much as possible and don't be fooled by the constant shooting at behind. Hit the red explosive barrels and you'll be fine. There's a checkpoint just up the street, so don't forget to shoot the red explosive box by the pillars of burning car wrecks and you'll be through in no time.

TRENESKA BORDER

It doesn't really matter which way you go, since the paths are circular – you'll always end up in the right direction, despite the sprawling feel. Use the silenced pistol or silenced AK47 to headshot the forest patrols (found by descending right from the start point to the cave). At the first military base, use the explosive scenery, and pick men off individually (take out the sentry post guards above first). Use the cover/buildings and keep looking for red explosive objects to pick off groups from range. Once you've crossed the border, you'll meet the armoured shotgun guards – they'll drop after initial fire, but don't be fooled, since they'll get up again. These soldiers need to be dispatched with a shotgun headshot (x2). Search the main farm building (pictured), and descend slowly, picking off guards one-by-one. Methodically clear each out house to complete the level.

NAZRAN TOWN

Use the flamethrower to destroy the wagon that runs the length of the second level. The trouble is, once you've got it you'll only have a short time to use it before it runs out. Proceed to the two engine guards in the buildings and clear the path. The Tunnel level proper offers a plenty of cover and targets and takes patience to clear. Proceed slowly, using the corners to your advantage. Some flame-throwing chaps will appear. The easiest tactic is to shoot the explosive barrels that accompany them. Timing is the key – shoot them when they're about to throw their flames. Remember, stay in cover and don't expose yourself and you'll be fighting fit for [illegible]

NAZRAN FOUNDRY

Use the starting vantage point, and exploit the scenery. Don't charge in, or the shotgun men will decimate you – use long-range headshots with the M16/rifle. Advance to the minefield. Spray it with bullets to clear a path/trigger a chain reaction killing nearby enemies. Shoot the big red boilers. In open environments like this, keep permanently down and go for headshots at range. Disable the foundry guards with explosive scenery. In the main building, three destruction targets are on the top level, the last one on the ground floor (shoot the tell tale red bits). The final, open, foundry room needs a slowly, slowly approach. Take out as many guards as possible from the cover of the first bend.

TIVOLIZ ASYLUM

[illegible] Use the pistol, use the automatic, watch guards off of ledges, let more grenadiers [illegible] do the hard work. They won't get killed. Careful grenade use is a must here, because the next few [illegible] The final RPG [illegible] enjoy the [illegible] guards, [illegible] to sneak by the tail of the helicopter. For now use a [illegible] about the grenade [illegible] Thirteen Asylum area [illegible] guards at all heights, so move carefully after blowing a path through the shutters, to use the hidden [illegible] on the top left. Don't touch the laser [illegible] of the guard's footprint [illegible] and remember, enemy grenadiers [illegible] to the lower chambers. The shielded grenadier [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

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Hawaii Five 0	tv4	Simpsons	tv12	Indiana Jones	ol04
Kung Kong	tv5	South Park	tv13	Exorcist	ol05
Knight Rider	tv6	Twilight Zone	tv14	Halloween	ol06
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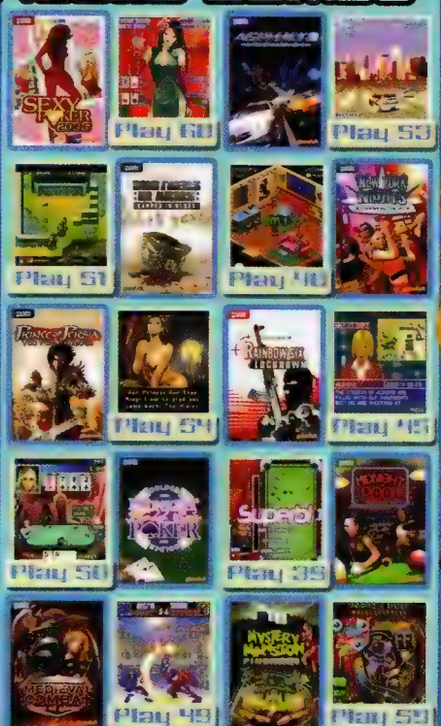

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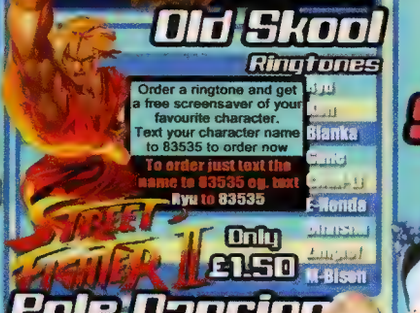

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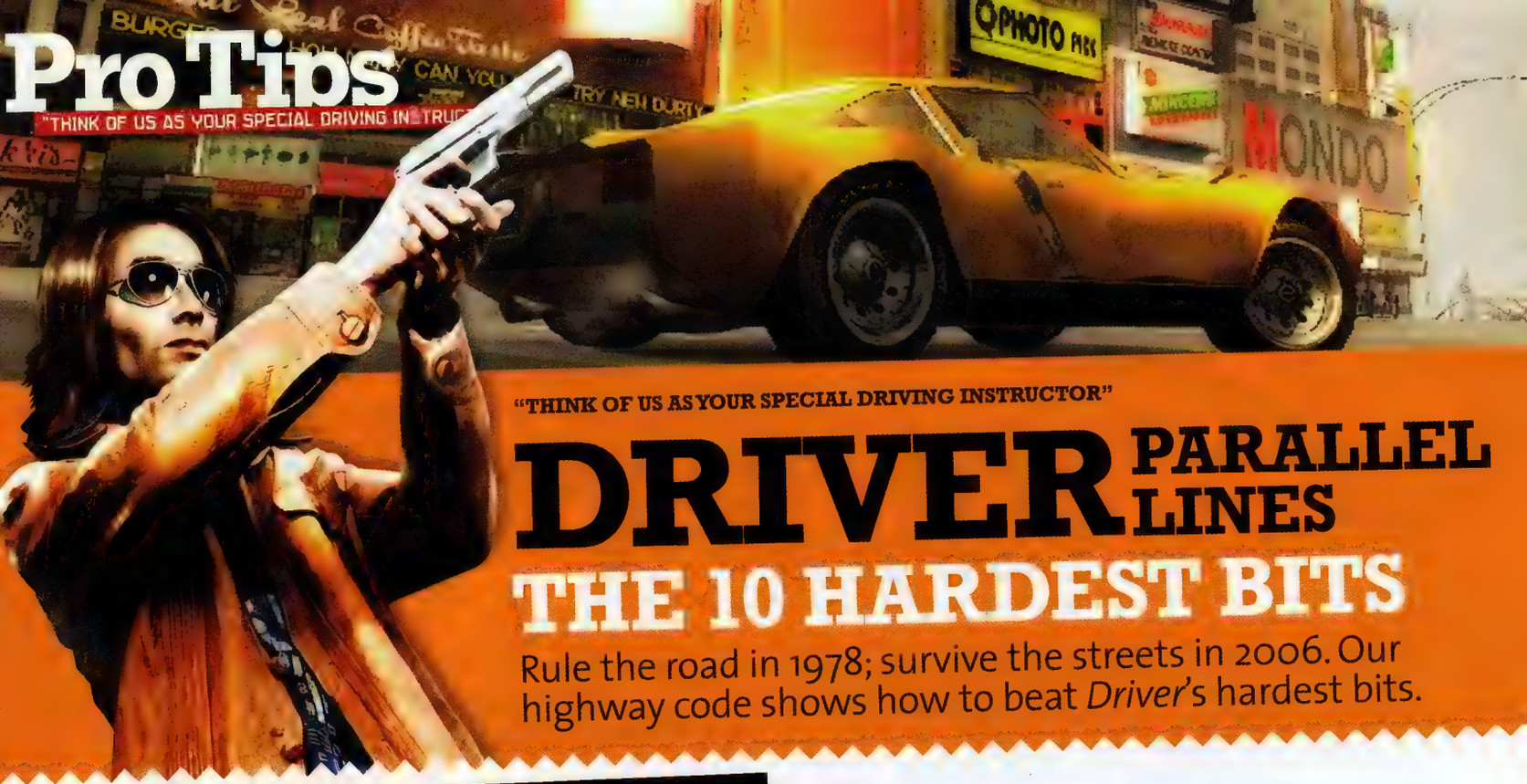


"THINK OF US AS YOUR SPECIAL DRIVING INSTRUCTOR"

DRIVER PARALLEL LINES

THE 10 HARDEST BITS

Rule the road in 1978; survive the streets in 2006. Our highway code shows how to beat *Driver*'s hardest bits.

1 BREAD RUN

Usual difficulty: 5/10

There's a brilliantly cheeky tactic you can use for this race between strip clubs. Rather than ignore your ambushers or play dodgems, *steal one of their cars*. You're now at the wheel of a heavily armoured 120mph beauty *and* you've left a carful of scum standing looking a bit bemused back at the club. Repeat for each strip club – you'll take less damage than you might think hopping between vehicles and there's a good chance the parked car you'll leave behind each time will block your pursuers. Remember this trick well as it'll come in handy for missions when you're being chased by your PS2's brain.

2 ROSALITA RACER

Usual difficulty: 7/10

Stuck on Repo Man? It's much easier if you barge the ambush vehicles *before* each tow. Now for Rosalita. Grab the car near the start if your modded vehicle is only fit for scrap. The best route is left at the first junction, then right to cross the park down south diagonally. Pelt along its western edge, then head south for a bit until you trundle onto the subway tracks. No traffic here, but keep off the actual rails – it slows you down. Stay southerly and approach Rosalita from the east (just start again if you're not first to her, because there's no chance you'll get her back in a decent state). Take the same route back, as the subway and park help shake off pursuers.

TOP TIP

In the alley running west alongside Central Park, the escape leads to the rooftops from the Kamikaze mission. Take them all the cops below and laugh as they puzzle over how to reach you.

3 CIRCUIT BREAKER

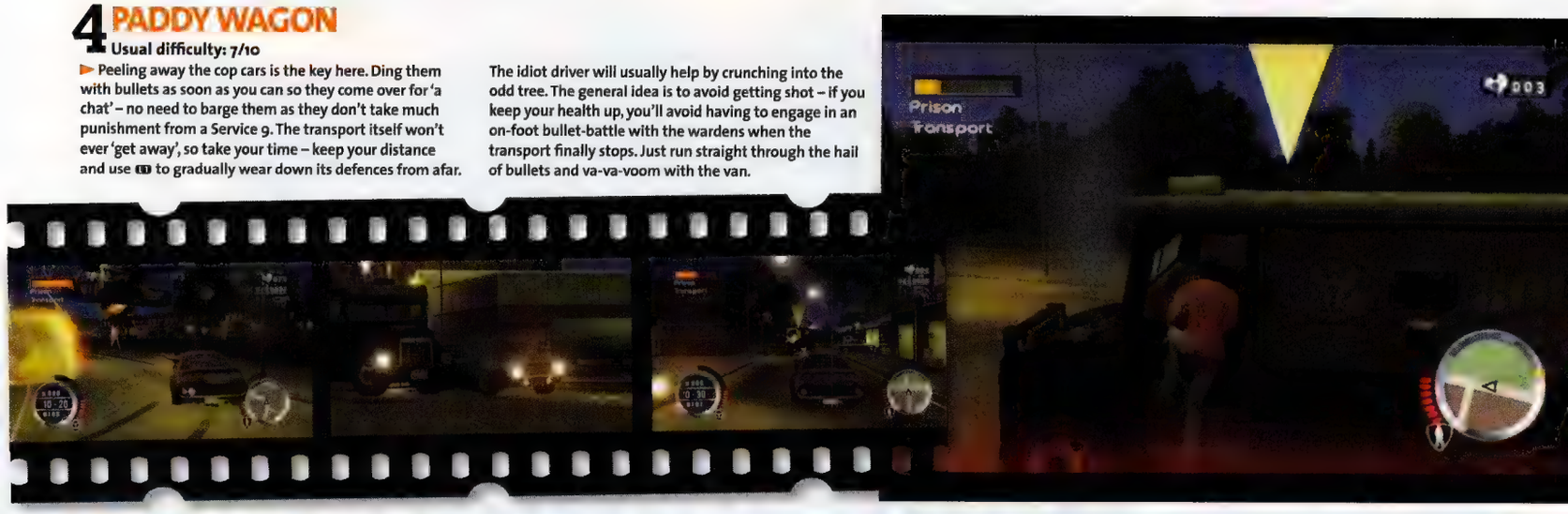
Usual difficulty: 6/10

Nick one of the sports cars near Ray's before activating the mission. On 'Go!', *reverse* for a bit and park the car so it's horizontal across one half of the track, lined up with the pit lane entrance. Then bag one of the orange cars in the pits and park it on the other side. Stand back – this is going to be fun. The racers try to dodge your little roadblock by careering straight into the pit lane, thus knocking themselves all out on lap one and leaving your boy to pootle around laps two to six on his tod. Even better: you can grab the other orange car – the ideal ride for pelting around race two's circuit the wrong way and smashing your rivals hard in the bonnet.

4 PADDY WAGON

Usual difficulty: 7/10

Peeling away the cop cars is the key here. Ding them with bullets as soon as you can so they come over for 'a chat' – no need to barge them as they don't take much punishment from a Service 9. The transport itself won't ever 'get away', so take your time – keep your distance and use L1 to gradually wear down its defences from afar. The idiot driver will usually help by crunching into the odd tree. The general idea is to avoid getting shot – if you keep your health up, you'll avoid having to engage in an on-foot bullet-battle with the wardens when the transport finally stops. Just run straight through the hail of bullets and va-va-voom with the van.



5 THE KIDNAP

Usual difficulty: 9/10

We can make this very easy for you. Race for the first checkpoint, but *don't* continue as normal. Instead, turn right and head straight over the bridge. We're off to the airport, that thin rectangle of road near Ray's at Le Guardia – so it's left off the bridge, then diagonally east across the park. Between here and the airport itself, the road's full of truck cabs. Jack one. Then park so it's blocking the locked gates to the airport, as in our picture. Now the good bit: the limo rams straight into the cab, leaving you clear to leap out of the bushes and take the wheel. Race off to the final checkpoint, chuckling to yourself as you go.

6 THE MEXICAN

Usual difficulty: 10/10

Welcome to 2006, eh? The subway chase isn't too taxing. Just tear under and alongside the tracks, and avoid the ramps – you can't trust gravity to be kind on the way down. The final shootout's the killer. Spin around and use L1 as soon as things kick off, murdering the men around you. Then run over to the bike parked in the corner. Dart in and out of cover here, using L1 to off the rooftop shooters, then grab the health pack nearby, make sure you've scooped up every bit of ammo from the corpses and strafe sideways to take out our Mexican mate. There are a couple more health packs near where you started if you fail to finish him in one run.

TOP TIP

7 RUSH HOUR

Usual difficulty: 6/10

Don't try for a first-time drugs find – it's *always* in the last car. But you can beat the time limit by knowing where the four beggars are headed. From the start, head left and up the main road – the first driver will smack right into you at the second junction. The second's on the raised freeway snaking around the island, so rendezvous with him by heading southwest to the nearest intersection. If you're quick, you'll meet on the bridge over to Manhattan – right where you need to be for drivers three and four. Take the long diagonal to Times Square and you should ram straight into car three. Then the clock stops, so the pressure's off for the final fella.

Pro Tips

"THINK OF US AS YOUR SPECIAL DRIVING INSTRUCTOR"

8 BISHOP

Usual difficulty: 9/10

Bring a healthy car to this one – Bishop's garage, off to the right of the entry gate, has one. There's no secret to this mission except getting it over with quickly. As soon as Bishop rolls in, flick left to switch to the rockets, hold L1 to aim, and keep hammering the R1 button while driving so that your car's bonnet is pointing towards the tank – this'll ensure the rockets don't fly off towards oblivion. It's likely your car will be KO'd by Bishop's first shot, but by this point he should be two or three direct hits away from going up in smoke. It might take a few tries, but it's more reliable than playing hide-and-seek.

9 BEAR CAGE

Usual difficulty: 8/10

Collecting and parking up the police car is easy. For the brisk stroll in and out of Corrigan's office, use the shotgun where possible, and run backwards to lure cops around corners and into your sights. Explore every room on your route back – the damage you'll take from the troops inside is more than offset by the lurking health kits. The final corridor has shielded cops – either run around to slap them from behind or just sprint straight for it if your health is up to it. Now hop in the red car and gun the accelerator – you'll learn the route through the gates after a few tries, saving you having to waste time shooting the controls. Finally, leg it.

10 CORRIGAN

Usual difficulty: 10/10

Deep breath, then. During the warehouse battle, spend time searching a room after clearing it of goons – you'll invariably find a red cross box, making the next batch of enemies a cinch. Back outside, hang back from the gate and aim for the cop cars. You can step a little way out of the gate without triggering Corrigan's flight, so kaboom everything in the vicinity, then hop in the parked sports car over the road. You don't need to catch Corrigan yet – head up around the curving road at the top of the island to trigger the tunnel chase, where you'll simply have to learn the pattern of rocks and kamikaze cars. Finally, break Corrigan's favourite toy. Easy! Ish.

TOP TIP

LOSE THAT TAIL!

More effective than a lubra-strip Mach 4. Here's our sure fire ways to get the fuzz off your ass in no time.

HUG BARRIERS: This is most effective along the western edge of the Manhattan. Scrape along the edge of railings next to water and – for reasons known only to themselves – the cops will often get confused and give up.

STOP-START: For when there are no long straights in sight. Stop, wait for the cops to hop out of their car, then race off. Just like on World's Scariest Police Videos. You can even get out and nick their car before you go.

UNPROTECT THE INNOCENT: Shooting at civilian cars will often trigger some panicky behaviour in their drivers – and as they veer all over the road, it's more likely the cops will ram straight into the poor souls.

BONUS! EARN MONEY: Not a cop-evading tactic, but still handy. If you crash through the special doughnut stand (left out the main road from Jersey Racetrack), the cops get real riled. Lose them this time and you'll earn a cash bonus.

DBMob

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CELEBRITY HOME MOVIES

254415 Pammy's Foxy Beach Show

254416 Pammy's Skinny Dip

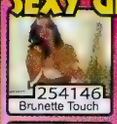
254419 Paris Tease

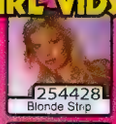
254418 Paris Midnight Show

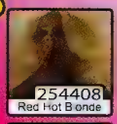
254412 Abi Girl on Girl

254189 Jodie Sex Tips

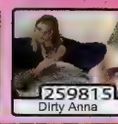
SEXY GIRL VIDS


254146 Brunette Touch

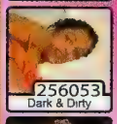

254428 Blonde Strip

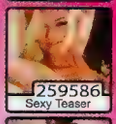

254408 Red Hot Blonde

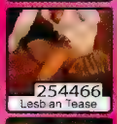
254468 Foxy Lesbies


259815 Dirty Anna

256234 Bikini Tease

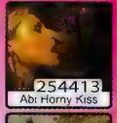

256053 Dark & Dirty

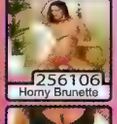

259586 Sexy Teaser

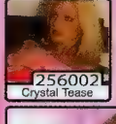

254466 Lesbian Tease

259817 Poolside Strip

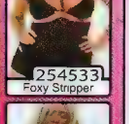
254467 Double Trouble


254413 Abi Horny Kiss


256106 Horny Brunette


256002 Crystal Tease

254464 Lessie Strip


254533 Foxy Stripper

254429 Sexy Blonde Babe Get Horny

254388 Andrea Tease

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254507 POLICE BABE
254508 PUT ME IN DETENTION
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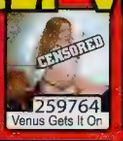
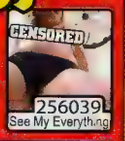
ADULT VIDEOS

259588 Lucie Shows All

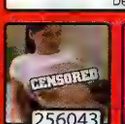

259764 Venus Gets It On

259756 Tina Strips


256039 See My Everything

256101 Deep Finger Action

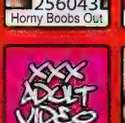
254436 Naked Brunette Pole Dancer

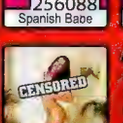

256043 Horny Boobs Out

256088 Spanish Babe

256095 Brunette Finger Fun

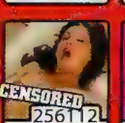
256078 Eastern Promise


259611 Girlie Threesome


256099 Red Hot Brunette

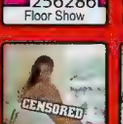
MORE ADULT VIDS

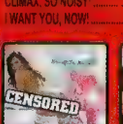
CHRISTINA ON THE BONNET	259615
STRAP ON FUN	259618
HORNY AS HELL AND EAGER TO PLAY	256057
VANESSA TAKES IT ALL OFF	259951
COME UPSTAIRS WITH ME	256051
PETITE AND PERT BLONDE	256052
NAUGHTY STOCKING THRILLER	256059
SPREAD AND READY	256081
LOOK AT ME COME CLOSER	256082
HOT ORIENTA.. TEASER	256087
BLONDE MOANS IN ECSTASY	256093
WICKED, WILD AND WET	256113
CLIMAX, SO NOISY	256121
I WANT YOU, NOW!	259169


256112 Hear Me Moan

256286 Floor Show

256434 Lucy Gets Saucy


254149 Brunette Show Off


254150 Bent Over & Ready

254152 Laid Back Brunette

CHART

	TRUE	POLY
SORRY	257103	251560
PUT YOUR RECORDS ON	257104	251561
BEEP	257114	251571
ITS CHICO TIME	257113	251570
NO TOMORROW	257115	251572
THUNDER IN MY HEART	258928	251547
SEWN	257116	251573
NASTY GIRL		251527
DON'T BOTHER	257117	251574
RUN IT		251529
YOU GOT THE LOVE	258929	251548
BOYS WILL BE BOYS		251533
WE'RE GOIN DOWN	258930	251549
SAY SAY SAY		251528
RIDE A WHITE HORSE	257097	251554
IS IT JUST ME	257106	251563

HIP HOP

	TRUE	POLY	MONO
GANGSTA'S PARADISE	258617	251027	M251027
CALIFORNIA LOVE	258476	251070	M251070
IN DA CLUB	258479	251071	M251071
SIGNS	257000	251229	M251229
LOVE IT OR HATE IT	257075	251254	M251254
GHETTO GOSPEL	258476	251288	M251288
GOLD DIGGER	258318	251378	M251378
YOU CAN DO IT	258198	251170	
ROCK SUPERSTAR		252176	M252176
HOT IN HERE	258873	251029	M251029
FAMILY AFFAIR	258821	251025	M251025
MY HUMPS	258317	251435	M251435
EMINEM - SLIM SHADY	258666	251012	M251012
HUSTLER'S AMBITION	258806	251539	
BAD BOY FOR LIFE	258913		
TILT YA HEAD BACK	258892		

ROCK

	TRUE	POLY	MONO
WALK THIS WAY	258499	252059	M252059
PARANOID	258548	252127	M252127
MONEY FOR NOTHING	258635	252179	M252179
SWEET CHILD O MINE	258709	252138	M252138
THE TROOPER	258722	251349	M251349
GIVE LOVE A BAD NAME	258563	252129	M252129
BAT OUT OF HELL	258830	252078	
WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS	258211	252131	M252131
SMOKE ON THE WATER	258190	252132	M252132
FINAL COUNTDOWN	258671	252134	M252134
AMERICAN IDIOT	258177	251116	M251116
WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE	258710	252139	M252139
LOVE A BAD NAME	258563	252129	M252129
BACK IN BLACK	258495		
CIGARETTES & ALCOHOL	258902		
ALL RIGHT NOW	258690		

REAL SOUNDS

	REAL
DR EVIL - THROW ME A BONE	258024
GREATEST ORGASM EVER!!	258031
AUSTIN POWERS - ALOTA FAGINA	258044
PATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS MAN	258051
DONALD DUCK GETTING A BJ	258056
MONKEY GOING NUTS	258080
CHOPPER BIKE - VERY THROATY	258117
DUKES OF HAZZARD - AIR HORN	258135
BEAVIS AND BUTTHEAD	258397
BILL AND TED	258398
DASTARDLY AND MUTLEY	258407
KRUSTY - THE SIMPSONS	258426
MISS PIGGY	258438
OBI - WAN KENOBI	258446
OZZY	258448
SOUTHPARK	258458

GAMES

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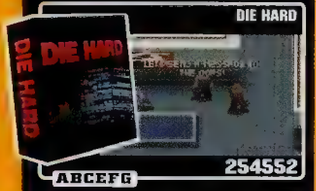
DIE HARD
ABCEFG 254552

RAMBO ON FIRE
ABCDEFG 254571

KAMASUTRA SEXPLOSION
ABCDEFG 254643

TOTAL OVERDOSE
ABCDEFG 254639

ROCKY BOXING
ABD 254626

STARGATE SG-1
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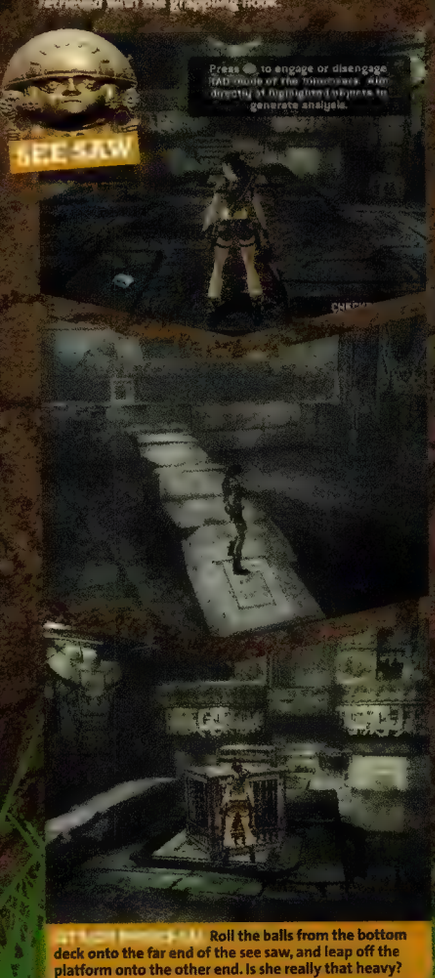
"TUTANKHAMEN IF YOU THINK YOU'RE HARD ENOUGH"

TOMB RAIDER LEGEND

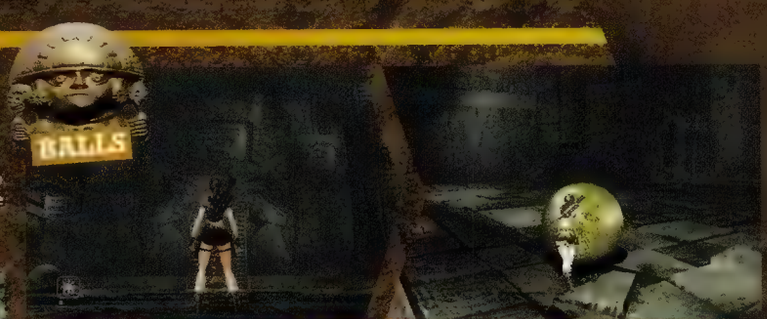
It's the easiest 'Raider yet – but you'll still get stuck without our guide to the trickiest puzzles and bosses

BOLIVIA

The opening level masks some tricky puzzles... There are two sticking points: 1) The see saw puzzle – see below, and 2) The rolling balls puzzle – see right. It's a good level for collecting all the hidden statues, so look out for Lara craning her neck in odd positions. The hidden statues glint slightly, and can usually be retrieved with the grappling hook.


SEE SAW
Press ● to engage or disengage TAD mode or the Thumbsticks when directly at highlighted objects to generate analysis.

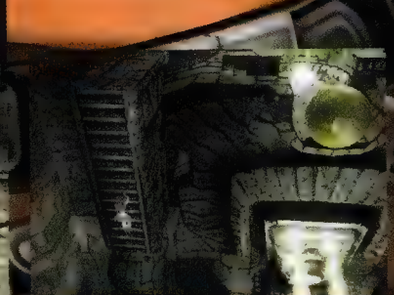
Roll the balls from the bottom deck onto the far end of the see saw, and leap off the platform onto the other end. Is she really that heavy?



Three floor switches. One ball. You need to find the others (one's on the top right)...

...shove the ball on the bottom floor onto the far left switch, then the switch in the middle.

After a brief cut-scene, roll the ball onto the right hand side switch to reveal a ladder on the right hand statue.



Ascend the ladder to the top platform. It's obvious enough, really.

Push the ball onto the floor, then place it over the left hand side switch.

The final ball is hidden on the left, above where you enter the room. Grapple it down...

Go through the opening. After the cut-scene, you need to shimmy/climb to the right.

PERU

Shooting practice. Bike riding. Ball rolling. Simple really.

Kick the ball into the goal, then loop around to the right to find a hidden statue. After the cut-scene, you'll be ambushed – practice scenery exploding shots (press Ⓐ) and slow-mo attacks (double-tap ⊗ near foes). After the easy bike section (the red boxes are health packs – tap ↑ on D-pad to use), you enter a retro section. If you get stuck, look for ball/switch solutions, and hidden-ish poles to swing off. Easy.

CAP AND HER ASS: Pick up weapons with Ⓐ – you can carry one extra (aside from the pistols), so go for the machine gun. Use the double-tap slow-mo targeting to ease by.

[illegible]: The route's not obvious. Up the pole and jump backwards...

[illegible]: Then use the grapple swing (look for ⊗ above you) to clear the gap.

PAUL FAITHFU: Blow the cage, climb the pole, grapple the roof open...

TRY SHOT: Tap R3 to enter free-aim mode and shoot the platform free.

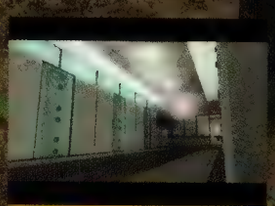
[illegible]: You need to tug the swinging platforms into place.

TOKYO

Love that dress...

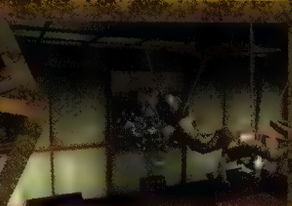
Talk to the barman, and enter the door to your far left. When you return a simple fight kicks off. To retrieve the bike, grapple the roof open (as above). Leap the bridge, and prepare for a simple bemani event. It's a basic grapple/leap/swing affair until you reach Takamoto's lair – to kill him, climb the pole to the top level, then leap about while shooting.

[illegible]: Free-aim the ropes, then grapple down the screen to proceed – just jump onto the platform created.



[illegible]: Use the switch in the far end room, then roll through.

[illegible]: When it looks like you've got nowhere to go...



[illegible]: ...use the grapple to start the dragon swinging into the glass.

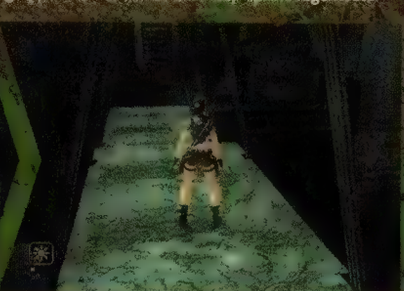
WATER WAY TO GO: Grapple the raft to your side (Ⓐ) and leap onto the ropes. Build momentum before jumping onto the next rope – or fall.

GHANA

The toughest level yet, so pay attention...

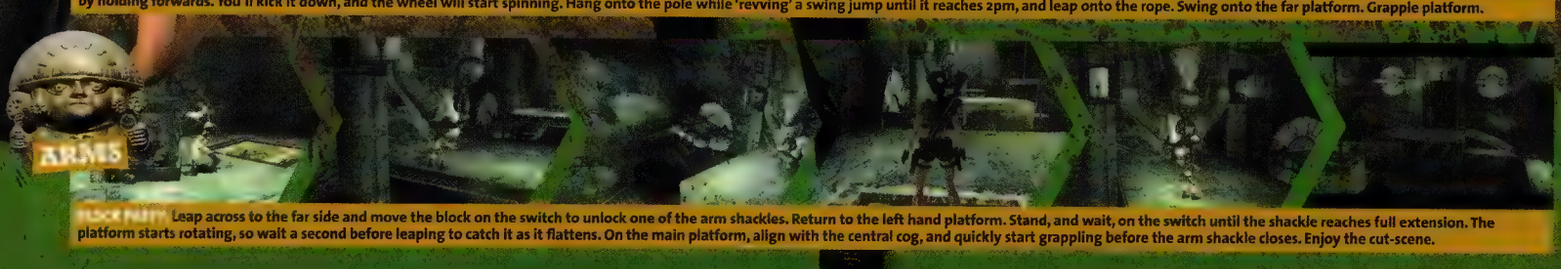
Swan dive off the cliff (you need to be running). Solve the simple rope tug/grapple door puzzle. It's plain sailing until the 'Lever' bit below (don't forget you can grapple while on the raft to tug it along). To beat Rutland, shoot the Ⓐ bits (stone heads), then grapple them off, so he can't leap up and regenerate.

[illegible]: When one side falls, the other rises, so you need to time your leap perfectly...



[illegible]: Start your running jump now – the animation cycle is slower than you'd think.

[illegible]: Once you've shot all the guards, climb the platform on the far side, and head to the rope on the left. Leap onto it (it may take a few goes), carefully align with the totem (pictured), and build up momentum by holding forwards. You'll kick it down, and the wheel will start spinning. Hang onto the pole while 'revving' a swing jump until it reaches 2pm, and leap onto the rope. Swing onto the far platform. Grapple platform.



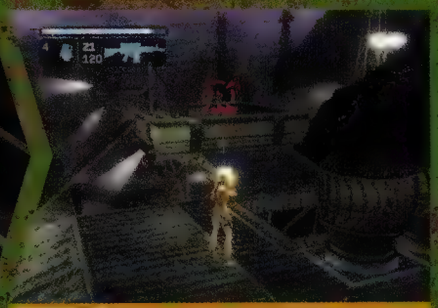
[illegible]: Leap across to the far side and move the block on the switch to unlock one of the arm shackles. Return to the left hand platform. Stand, and wait, on the switch until the shackle reaches full extension. The platform starts rotating, so wait a second before leaping to catch it as it flattens. On the main platform, align with the central cog, and quickly start grappling before the arm shackle closes. Enjoy the cut-scene.

KAZAKSTHAN

One of the longest and hardest levels

Use the barrels to kill the guards. Enter building. Climb ladder (right). Jump across. Use zip line. Kill guards. Enter building on opposite side with exploding barrel outside. After cut scene, leave. Kill men, press gate switch. Shoot barrels. Enter building. Cut scene. Climb ladder. Zip line, kill men and find bike at end of railtrack – but be quick. After easy but long, bike section, prepare for some quick button presses as the train enters the building. You'll pick up in a position directly below in a flaming building (follow the sequences below). In the lab, it's a simple swing/shimmy/jump/grapple affair to stay above the electricity – the path is obvious. The only obscure bit is using the grapple to drag the charged ball down the track.

Inside the first building, the supporting strut is actually a ladder...



ROOF JUSTICE Watch out for the distant guard, then leap across. It's a simple zip wire to the next section.

After the bike section, grapple the rope closer to you and swing to the far side platform. Then climb the ladder,...

SIGN LANGUAGE ...leap across to the ledge, shimmy to the far end, then angle a jump at the poles. Swing to safety. Grapple the rope over the flames. Swing. Blow the grate. Leap across and up.

You can't start the engine immediately, so climb to the gantry (behind left), then leap onto the fan box (second from left above). Leap onto the platform, and follow the path behind the fuel engine until you appear on its left hand side. Leap onto the rope and you'll pull the fuel delivery system into place, activating the previously locked door, and the dangerous electricity system. Oh, good.

After the magnetic gun, drop down a level on the broken ramp. Wait unti the charge is near the top, then leap and climb up the pole (first left). Leap off backwards onto the platform. Swing from pole to pole (second from left) onto the rope. Let it go still, and angle towards the vertical poles. You need to wait for longer than comfortable on the first pole to avoid jumping into the charge on the second (far right).

Leap off the box onto the ladder and jump round.

Sat the ropes swinging, then run through.

Haul the box along the track. Grapple the door.

Use the gun to pull the platform to the right.

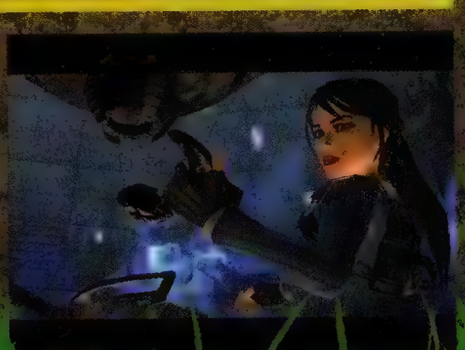
HOW TO BEAT THE ELECTRIC BEAST

It's the stupidest bit of the game – but this'll save you the pain.

Don't waste time shooting the beast – you can pull and shoot it into the electric field (once the balls are in motion) but it won't die, only slow down. Do this instead...

Sprint (and leap) around the outside to pull all four levers.

Blast (□) all the hanging balls until they crackle.



When all the balls are lit up, jump off the chair, align with the hanging handle and grapple it loose – but be quick.

ENGLAND

The acrobatics are *almost* tricky on Lara's home turf...

Grapple glinting vent (see far right). Drag crate as jump point. Grapple smaller vent. Shimmy to switch (right). Return. Pull sword to open gate. From far right of room, jump onto horizontal poles and follow sequence below. Use fork lift to ram crates. Ram coffin for statue. Ram wonky-looking wall (use goggles to spot). Ram spears. After bemani bit, you need to descend carefully – use the ledges and angled jumps. Outside temple, grapple both swinging posts at 90°, then proceed on logical path from left hand side. Don't rush the swing jumps. After the dragon battle (see below), you return via the route you came, but under fire. Leap onto lift from broken steps to ascend.

START HERE: At the start, look up to spot a grapple point, and drag the crate to leap up.

CROUCH TO CRAWL: Once lifted, climb the pole and jump/shimmy on ledges to safety.

FLAMING FOR AMMO: Leap off (and point) backward. From the pole (second right) you need to leap on the drawbridge, leap back, and leap forward again quickly.

BLADE MOTHER CUTTER: Pull switch to slow blades. Roll through to retrieve box. Push it to jam blades. Duck under. Retrieve crate. Advance, using it to jam other blades.

CHANDELIER: Grapple the chandelier to dislodge the coffin (like Tokyo glass smash bit). Grapple surf to edge of water. Stand on switch and reel coffin onto it.

DRAGON: Shoot the bell repeatedly (watch the sonic waves) until the dragon pauses under the cage. Quickly grapple and pull the switch. Repeat four times.

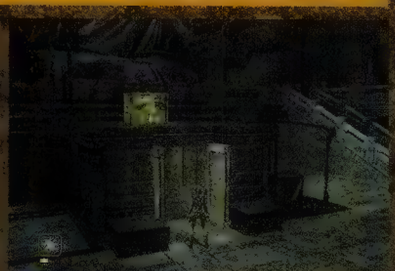
INITIAL RUN: The initial path is obvious, but use Ⓐ to shimmy quick when the ledges crack. From position (left), swing jump, then rapid leap between breaking stalagtites (middle) onto ledge (just keep tapping ⊗ in rhythm). Edge round, then free-aim the cracked ice door.

NEPAL

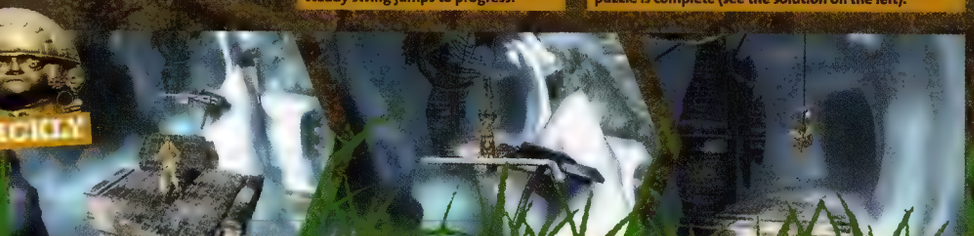
Beware the collapsing platforms...

It's almost entirely an agility level, with fairly obvious paths – made tricky by collapsing platforms. At the plane, grapple the engine onto the rear to stabilise it. Once at the buddha (far right), stand on the right hand scale, drag small box onto it, stand on left scale, drag buddha box onto it. Go right scale, drag big box onto it. Climb onto middle. Drag buddha box onto switch. Use grave and bell swing chime to escape tomb.

BUDDHA BOX PUZZLE: Use two steady swing jumps to progress.



FINAL PUZZLE: Note the position of the crates when the puzzle is complete (see the solution on the left).



LAST PUZZLE: The second platform collapses, so carefully align the first jump to avoid problems. Land, and rapid fire leap onto the pole (which collapses almost instantly too), rotate only twice (the bare minimum – you'll know the routine by now), then swing jump to the cavern.

BOLIVIA REDUX

The last level is the first. Clever, huh? Suit yourself.

You'll have the secret weapon now, so equip it and swing like crazy – just take care to snaffle the health packs from the first set of goons, since there are none in the Amanda battle. Just keep jumping/rolling and shooting her, then Ⓐ whack her when she falls. Repeat. Lament cut-scene leading to obvious sequel.

GOONS: What are the odds? That's every baddie.

AMANDA: Keep rolling, use cover and swing – it's easy.

SECRET REWARDS

Collect the hidden statues (in Croft Manor and the game) to unlock 3D object renders, cheats (like increased ammo clips) and cheats – like this odd texture-less mode.

MAKE LOVE: It's completely useless, but odd for at least ten confusing seconds.

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fantasy animations

YO, HOMEBAKE! THIS SHIZZLE IS TIGHT! RECOGNIZE!

(AKA: A LESSON IN VIRAL MARKETING)

Welcome to marketing 101. Today we'll be using this *actual post* from a *real forum* as an example of how *not* to get 'down' with 'da kids'.

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Oh, come on. Lone Hero? What an absolutely shameful attempt at fitting in with da yoof. Next time try one of the following names and you'll slip in unnoticed like a viral marketing fox.

50_Cent_1986 CaptainDrugs
Wicked_Dude_12x I_Love_Hammers
GunsRwicked32354355 N33d4sp33d_dood
2pacforlife MEGA_BONG_FACE

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Don't say *that*. You may as well call the thread "I'm a fibbing jive turkey and I'm trying to warp your tiny minds". Most forum threads have really *excitable* headers, so call yours something like –

"DOOOOD! You have GOT to CHECK THIS OUT! It's wick-o-tron, mate!"

Possibly the greatest game ever made.

Goto page 1, 2, 3 Next

new topic locked GamesRadar Forum Index -> General games chat

View previous topic :: View next

Author	Message
Lone Hero Starting Member Joined: 07 Mar 2006 Posts: 3	Posted: Tue Mar 07, 2006 7:06 pm Post subject: Possibly the greatest game ever made. quote I dont know if you have heard of a game called 'Just Cause' coming out soon. Heres the lowdown and some screenshots. Prepare to be amazed. Just Cause is a third-person full-out action game set within the huge fictional Caribbean republic of San Esperito San Esperito is a living breathing world. Throughout the game you will find villages, shantytowns, jungles, freeways, vast cityscapes, mountaintops, railroads and even an outdoor volcano bordello. Rico (main character) is a highly trained Agency operative who can perform many breathtaking stunts and gravity-defying tricks. Rico can parachute onto a car roof, pull out the driver and get inside to commandeer the vehicle: an airborne carjacker! Furthermore, Rico is equipped with the patented ProTec Grappler G3™ grappling hook, which enables him to hitch a ride with any vehicle, using his trusty parachute. All the vehicles in the game are available to the player. There will be a great variety of land, water and air vehicles to choose from: motorcycles, cars, tanks, helicopters, jet fighters, cargo planes, underwater scooters, jet propelled speedboats and much much more! You can carjack a pickup truck, drive it straight into a wall in an explosion of burning gasoline, jump out of it at the very last second and fall down a steep cliff, turn around in midair to beh the devastation before deploying your parachute and navigate into an army base and shoot the hell out of the enemy with your huge arsenal of totally lethal and extremely cool weapons! There are endless possibilities for unadulterated, irresponsible, flat out fun! The weather system is hyper-realistic and is based upon actual meteorological factors. Now the screenshots.

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If you're going to try and pass yourself off as a 'normal' poster instead of a soulless marketing puppet-person, then at least post for a few days beforehand. If you had 200 posts and a 'name' on the forum they'd be less likely to jump to the conclusion that you're an insolent suit-wearing fraudster.

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Nobody speaks like this. It's clumsy, awkward and sounds like a middle-aged man pretending to be an excitable child. Also, the grammar is way too perfect. For example, instead of saying...

"I don't know if you've heard of a game called *'Just Cause'* coming out soon. Here's the lowdown and some screenshots. Prepare to be amazed."

Say...

"Woot! Doods, check dis out! I just downloaded these screenshots and it's well bum! Look at dem water effex, mate! Chill time! Groov-o-tron!"

OTHER TOP VIRAL MARKETING TIPS

- To get known around the forum as a 'character' mercilessly insult other users for the tiniest, most trivial errors.
- Get into a 'yoof state of mind' by listening to 50 Cent, sucking on crack pipes and calling your female friends (and your mum) "bitches".
- Be really, really snooty and correct absolutely *everything* and you may become a moderator. Everyone respects a moderator. Then it's payday. Oh, yeah! It's yacht time, baby!

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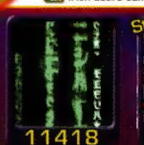
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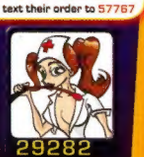
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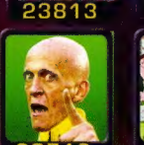
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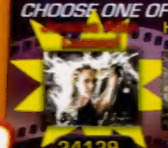
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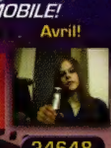

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